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UNITAS

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INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY REVIEW

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THE FORTHCOMING ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

The Usefulness of the Council.

Let us consider, first of all, of what use a council might be in our own time — that is, since the Vatican Council — and the coming Council in particular.

Almost a century has passed since the first Vatican Council was interrupted by the Franco-German war of 1870. This long interval in which no council has been held is not to be wondered at; indeed there was a much longer interval between the Council of Trent, which ended in 1563, and the Vatican Council. Many people thought that the original Council, which was suspended rather than regularly closed, should have been taken up again, and that a definite answer should be given to the important problems for which excellent outline solutions had already been prepared. However, it was decided that the break has been too long. The future Council, though it too will be held in the Vatican within St. Peter's Basilica, will not be a continuation of the first, but will be a new Council, the second Vatican Council. Cardinal Tardini, Secretary of State to His Holiness, has expressly said as much in the course of a recent press conference.

And indeed since the end of the last century there have taken place many changes of outlook; existent problems have assumed new aspects, and new problems have arisen. It is better to avoid sewing a new patch on to an old garment.

On the other hand, we should be careful not to assume that doctrinal matters have been at a standstill during the 90 years that have passed since the Vatican Council. Whenever it has been necessary, the Bishops in their respective dioceses, and above all the Supreme Pontiff for the whole of Christendom, have explained and specified the truth of the faith or rules of conduct when these were in need of clarification. Pius X's holy war waged against Modernism at the beginning of this century complemented earlier decisions in many details. For example, he completely banished the confusion which idealist or immanentist doctrines had introduced into the knowledge of the true God. In the anti-modernist oath he affirmed with new precision that human reason does possess the power of demonstrating the existence of God by means of created things —

a God who is Creator of the world and distinct from His own works, just as the infinite is distinct from the finite. Thus he put an end to the teachings which had caused havoc in the nineteenth century by setting up a distinction between the faith of the simple and the faith of intellectuals, maintaining that these latter had the right to hold at one and the same time scientific or historical theories which were opposed to revealed doctrine. And when the development of organic science and of history gave rise to new, rash, and pernicious theories, the Popes, most especially Pius XII in the encyclical *Humani Generis* defended the deposit of faith both energetically and opportunely. In any case, the first Vatican Council has assumed an incontestable place among the important events of history.

But some have sought to see in this very fact of papal intervention a proof that councils are no longer necessary. Prior to the solemn and definitive proclamation of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff, it was necessary to summon councils from time to time, whenever decisions had to be made for the whole Church. The faith of the Church, the infallible bride of Christ, was manifested in assemblies of Bishops brought together to oppose heresy. Did Arius attack the divinity of the Word? The Fathers met at Nicaea. Did Nestorius deny the divinity of Jesus Christ? The Council of Ephesus was summoned. Was the integrity of the human nature of the Word Incarnate endangered by Eutyches? The Fathers safeguarded it at Chalcedon. Did Luther inveigh against the very foundations of the Church? The faithful bishops censured him at the Council of Trent. Finally the Fathers assembled at the Vatican defended the divine constitution of the Church by defining the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff. Now, one might argue, that should be enough! If a new heresy should arise, the Pope would condemn it, and all Catholics would accept his condemnation what need should there be of further councils?

In this sort of reasoning many errors lie hidden. First of all, the Popes did not leave the duty of defending the faith to councils alone. Throughout all history they have, by letters, by decrees, by condemnations, resolved such problems as arose, and their authority was generally recognised. St. Augustine, when he had received Pope Innocent I's reply against the Pelagian heresy, wrote « causa finita est » — the discussion is over. Pope St. Leo in a letter to Bishop Flavian declared the true doctrine of the Incarnation to the Fathers of Chalcedon, and they all cried out, « Peter has spoken through the mouth of Leo ». Even before calling the Vatican Council Pope Pius IX had defined on his own authority the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and Christian people rejoiced greatly.

The privilege of the infallibility of St. Peter's successor, which

has always been affirmed by the Roman Pontiffs, throws into clearer light the usefulness of Ecumenical Councils. It by no means renders them redundant. Even when the Pope makes a decision alone, he makes it within the Church, united to the Church, as the Head of the Church; and in particular he is united with the bishops since he is the first among them, as St. Peter was first among the apostles. He lays down the law as to the faith of the Church, and to do this he must know what that faith is. By what better means can he do this than by consultation with the bishops? When Pope Pius XII wished to define the dogma of the Assumption of the Mother of God, he did not, it is true, summon a council. But he did consult all the bishops, and they informed him of their own belief and the belief of the faithful. Thereafter it was simply a question of stating the fact of belief in this privilege of Mary, a fact which had been gloriously manifested for centuries. But some problems may be more complex, calling for prolonged examination and serious discussion. In such cases the summoning of a council is particularly indicated so that every point of view may be presented, problems may be clarified, and general accord may be achieved. For the rest, it should be stressed that neither Pope nor councils wish purely and simply to pronounce definitions. On most occasions they simply want to declare, reaffirm, bring back to notice a doctrine which has been contradicted or at any rate forgotten. Or they may wish to recall a point of doctrine which has been insufficiently observed.

The forthcoming Council, the second Vatican Council, will have as its principal aim — as the Holy Father has said in his Encyclical *Ad Petri Cathedram* — the encouragement of the spread of the Catholic faith, a healthy renewal of Christian customs among the people, and also the better adapting of discipline to the necessities and character of our times. Who can fail to see the utility of a world-wide council of Bishops united together, to achieve these aims?

An Ecumenical Council stirs up an enormous amount of activity, to the benefit of the Church, both during the preparatory period and also in the course of the Council itself. The Acta of the Council of Trent and of the Council of the Vatican fill many volumes, in which one may follow page by page the story of the decrees and of their laborious editing up to the moment of their approval and promulgation. One can verify that by means of this careful attention everything has been studied, examined, perfected. The result is a better appreciation of the necessity of the Church, a deepening of the truth of the Church, a better adapted defence of doctrine for the needs of the times, and a happy renewal of practice. When the entire Catholic hierarchy united with the

visible Head and assisted by the Holy Spirit pronounce their decisions for the conservation of the faith and the improvement of Christian practices, the event must be bathed in such light and authority that a renewal of the spiritual life will flourish in the Church, and our separated brethren will not fail to see in it the finger of God.

The Orthodox vis-à-vis the Council.

With respect to the reunion of Christians, it is well known that not all are equally prepared. In spite of some confused declarations that have been recently made, it remains evident that the distance between the separated Eastern Churches and the Catholic Church is much less than that between Protestants and Rome. Archbishop Anthony Bashir, the metropolitan of the Orthodox Church in New York has even maintained that any discussion about Christian unity should be confined to Orthodox and Catholics. He has proposed that the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople should agree to call a meeting of theologians and canonists of the two Churches. Of course, one must try to bring Protestants back to unity, even those whose doctrine is far removed from the truth; but relations with the Orthodox are of a different kind and must be considered by themselves.

The climate of opinion created by the ecumenical movement within the last half-century has allowed the leaders of Orthodoxy to extend a sincere welcome to the announcement of the Ecumenical Council. Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople, who is called « ecumenical » and who enjoys a certain pre-eminence in the Orthodox world, had already shown his approval of the first acts of Pope John XXIII, and had applied to him the words of the Gospel, « There was a man sent from God whose name was John ». After the announcement of the Council he said to his priests: « We must be ready when the moment for the Council comes, and we too must have theologians to discuss with Rome the grave problem of the union of the Church ». Various members of the Orthodox hierarchy have expressed similar sentiments, and it is expected that there will be an assembly of all the Orthodox hierarchy to adopt an official attitude towards the Council.

Meanwhile, the Greek and Russian theologians have tackled the problem earnestly. They are quite familiar with the position of the Roman Church; that she cannot, even under pain of destruction, modify her doctrine on the points disputed with the Orthodox, namely the supremacy of the Pope, and the Immaculate Conception and Assumption of the Virgin. But from their point

of view they think that their Church would indeed be destroyed if she were to accept the whole Roman faith. According to them, it is Rome that separated herself from the Universal Church in 1054 and proceeded to create dogmas regardless of tradition. Of their own Church they say clearly: « There can be no question of recognising the position which the Bishop of Rome claims within the Church » (*Orthodoxos Skepsis,* signed A.J.A., 31st January 1959). Rome cannot change. The East cannot change. Will the separation, then, remain eternally? Is reunion impossible? Faced with this question the Eastern theologians hesitate: they express certain viewpoints which are worthy of the greatest attention.

Hamilcar Alivisatos, a professor of the Faculty of Theology at Athens, proposes first of all an attempt at co-existence. Just as it was possible before the schism to live together, notwithstanding real divergences and perpetual difficulties, so today it should be possible to return to this situation as in times gone by, without the Latin part passing judgement on what goes on amongst the Byzantines, and vice-versa. But he himself has little faith in such a solution; and in fact neither did the Popes of the past choose to ignore what was going on in the East, nor would those of the present day agree to do so. In any case, Professor Alivisatos does not abandon himself to despair, and, presuming that Orthodox observers will be present at the Council, he concludes: « Who can tell but that over this meeting there will breathe the good Spirit which breathes where it wills? May not the Spirit lead the minds and hearts of those who make up the Council, and who believe sincerely in the omnipotence of the Paraclete, to extraordinary deeds which are presumably impossible, as in times gone by He descended upon the apostles, for the realization of unity: not as men will it but as God wills it, who desires that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, that all may be one ». (*To Vima,* 1st February 1959).

Another Orthodox, the Russian theologian Father Florovsky, who is well known in ecumenical circles, is opposed to the presence of Orthodox observers at the Council; but he makes noteworthy suggestions for reunion. He is convinced that the issue between the two Churches is that of the primacy of the Roman Pontiff, and he asks what the second Vatican Council could do to diminish the difficulty. The first Council, in fact, was interrupted by the Franco-German war in 1870, without being able to declare everything that had been prepared by the work of the theologians on the doctrine of the Church itself. Father Florovsky holds that the forthcoming Council must « give an authentic interpretation of the dogma of the Vatican in the wider context of a doctrine of

the Church. In this context we may hope that the ' dogma of the Vatican ' will take on a different aspect, will give forth a new sound » (*Le Messager,* publication of the Russian Christian Students Movement, No. 52, 1959). This Russian theologian is also of the opinion that such a work could be done in better conditions than those of 1870, in view of the progress made in ecclesiology. « It is enough », he says, « to mention the rebirth of Thomism, modernism, the contemporary liturgical movement, and the intensive studies which have been made in every field of theological science within the fold of the Roman Church itself » (*ibid.*).

In any case, adds Father Florovsky, the Orthodox must not wait with their arms folded for results from the Catholic side. They, too, must think out the truth about schism and about the Roman Church. Many Orthodox are too prone to hasty judgements, he suggests, saying for instance that everything Roman is invalid, even Roman baptism. The Catholic Church is fairer to the Orthodox: from the point of view of Roman Canon Law, says Father Florovsky, the Orthodox Church is a Church, although in schism and not entirely in the truth. Her sacraments remain valid, and Orthodox priests have not only the « character » but also, within certain limits, « jurisdiction ». Consequently, he concludes, « before passing judgement on the possibility of a meeting with Roman Catholics, springing from the necessity of peace and of international collaboration, Orthodox theologians and the authorities of the Orthodox Churches must sincerely and frankly face up to the problem of the real nature of the « Roman Church » or of the « Roman schism ». And that will call for a full and elaborate statement of the doctrine of the Church » (*ibid.*).

This attitude on the part of a theologian who is so representative of his Church, as Father Florovsky is, is very encouraging, especially since this expert exponent of ecumenicism sees in the problem of unity above all a question of truth, and also because he seems to hold that this question of truth can be solved by a more exact knowledge of the doctrine of the Roman Church. We can but hope that he will find many followers.

Protestants and the Council.

Now let us turn our attention to the children of the Reformation; we shall try to give an account of their various reactions. They, of course, are much less agreed among themselves than are the Orthodox, and we must beware of attributing to all that which is to be found among some of them.

The officials of the World Council of Churches have shown

great reserve right from the beginning. They seemed to think it possible, and perhaps desirable, that the Council announced by Pope John XXIII should be like an assembly of their own Council, like a bigger version of the assemblies of Amsterdam and Evanston. This would in fact be more in conformity with their idea of the word « ecumenical »: for them it means the ensemble of still-divided confessions. But it became clear at once to everyone that the Pope was visualising the forthcoming Council as being like the earlier Ecumenical Councils, whose universality was not composed of various denominations, but of the one and only Church of Christ, the Catholic Church, represented by her Bishops. If the Church has had to refuse to take part in the World Council of Churches (for in doing so she would have given the impression of doubting her own truth), she has not done so in order to create in her turn another council of the same sort. A council in which some members admitted no authority other than Holy Scripture interpreted according to their own personal criteria would be a Protestant assembly, necessarily and permanently divided in itself. It would not be a Catholic council, informed by unity, the guardian of unity, a type and inspiration of unity. Christians separated from the Apostolic See could be admitted if they wanted, as observers, but not as judges of the faith, because they themselves do not profess that same faith.

Yet there is no reason why the word « ecumenical » should not be given in addition a meaning which includes the various confessions, provided this is not done with reference to the Council. So for example one can speak of the ecumenical assembly of Evanston, or again of the ecumenical spirit, of ecumenical work, of Catholic ecumenicism, all in the sense of fraternal talks between confessions. In any case, many Protestants, who are attached to their notion of ecumenicism, would like to regard the ecumenical Council of the Vatican only as a denominational Council. They are quite convinced that all Christians belong in the same way to the Church of Christ, while the Catholic Church believes herself to be that Church in a unique way.

However, one gathers from the newspapers that the future council will be very important in the eyes of Anglicans and Protestants alike. They know that the Pope had them in mind, that he is preparing for progress towards that Christian unity which all desire. It is true that they understand this unity in a different manner from the Pope, yet they admit that the Catholic Church could hardly do otherwise. Many of them conceive of the ecumenical movement in this way: the various Churches, separated one from another, find themselves today on an equal footing before

Christ; they all want to go forward towards Him, and in this journey they will inevitably come towards each other, until finally they meet in Christ. To be sure, there is great truth in this conception: whatever is truly Christian is Catholic, and all progress in the Christian sense of the word is progress towards the Catholic Church. Then, too, the more Catholics respond to what their faith demands of them, the more will they amend in themselves those defects which may alienate their separated brothers. But we must acknowledge that in this converging advance the Catholic Church enjoys a matchless position; she has no changes to make in her doctrine, while the others, if they are really growing closer to the mind of Christ and to His will, must attain to and accept all that Catholic doctrine which at present they say they must reject.

The Council appears to a certain number of the disciples of Luther, of Calvin and of Cranmer as an unhoped-for opportunity for the various Christian communions to draw together. They do not expect any change in Catholic doctrine, but they hope that there may be forthcoming interpretations or explanations which will allow them a better relationship with the Roman Church. Certainly, a lucid explanation of the truth, which is so often misunderstood, can contribute a lot to this growing together, just as a more exact observance of discipline can suppress those imperfections which disturb, sometimes seriously, certain groups of Christians. The Holy Father intends that the Council should have a function of this sort, and that it should achieve a solemn manifestation of the Church's prerogatives. *Incessu patuit dea-* ' a goddess is known by her bearing '.

Groups have established themselves nearly everywhere throughout Protestantism which are filled with a real understanding of the Roman Church and which are sincerely anxious to progress in their relations with her. These groups rejoice at the thought of the Council and expect great results. Some have written as much to the Pope. Others declare it in their journals, in particular the German Lutheran movement which calls itself « Die Sammlung » (The gathering). Its director, Dr. Asmussen, has written: « The Council announced by Pope John XXIII cannot but help Christian unity. This fills innumerable Christians with joy, and rouses in them the highest hopes ». And he adds: « Everyone must have a feeling of responsibility, so that everything may be done which might help the Council ». And he goes on to indicate that which, in his opinion, the Evangelical Church of Germany ought to examine in herself, and compare with the Roman Church: grace, the Mass, the philosophy used in theology. This philosophy, he says, is that of Descartes, of Kant, and of Hegel and Heidegger:

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and it has not been adapted to Christian thought as was Greek philosophy by the works of Augustine and St. Thomas.

One important ecumenical fact is the agreement of various Protestant writers, French, German and Swiss, in recognising in the words of Jesus to St. Peter the consecration of this apostle as head and foundation of the Church, as Catholics understand it. « Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church ». Doubtless these theologians are still few in number, but their influence is recognised. They do not draw out all the implications of this text, but they have taken a big step forward; and this leads us to hope for more.

Thus, the imminence of the Council is stirring up serious rethinking among our many separated brethren. Let us pray, for them and with them, for a docility to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

CHARLES BOYER, S. J.

MARIOLOGICAL NOTIONS IN THE FIRST WRITINGS OF LUTHER

In the early 1500's Wittenberg was still a small town in the country with from two to three thousand inhabitants, isolated and not easy to reach, far from the main roads of communication and commerce. Yet it was able to boast of a castle, where there resided one of the candidates to the imperial throne — the elector, Frederick the Wise — a monastery of Augustinians, and a university. The university came into being through the initiative of Prince Frederick with the ambitious intention of making of Wittenberg a center of culture which would attract students from all over Germany and which would rival the secular University of Leipzig in prestige. In this enterprise the Augustinians were deeply involved, thanks, above all, to the personal interest of the Vicar General of their order, John Staupitz. The latter, in fact, had become dean of the university, and had assumed the chair of Sacred Scripture. This he relinquished only in favor of a young man of thirty — a friar of great promise who had but recently won his doctorate in theology — his subject and his confidant: Fra' Martin Luther.

As far as the theme of our essay is concerned, the first category of Luther's writings which is of interest to us is that which places us in contact with *Doctor Martinus* as he delivers his lectures on the Psalter in his new role as Biblical exegete at Wittenberg.

We find ourselves, therefore, in August, 1513, and this course of commentaries on the Psalms will continue with us until 1515. Then from there we shall have to pass on to some of Luther's other works. When it is a matter of dealing with the first writings of an author it is always easier to say where one must begin rather than where one must end. In Luther's case, however, it seems justifiable to suppose that in this category there are to be included those writings which preceded the noted controversy on indulgences which began on October 31, 1517, with the posting of the 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg. If, therefore, we accept these limits for our theme, we have four years to pass in review — from 1513 to 1517. This interval furnishes us with the greater part of the writings belonging to the so-called Catholic period of Luther. How far this appellation can

be considered appropriate is difficult to say. Certainly he is still a Catholic — at least in his external obedience to the Church. It is certain, too, that he does not wish to be considered heretical. But he is of an anxious mind, disturbed, spiritually restless — an individual who, in his search for a system which would satisfy his spiritual and intellectual needs, resorts even to a personal and ruthless criticism of Christianity. This quest often brings him into conflict with sound Catholic doctrine. Perhaps unknowingly and without wishing to, Luther is already setting up the foundations upon which he will base the new construction of the Reformation. From the writings of the period which we are considering, one gets the clear presentiment, in fact, of many of his eventual basic doctrines, when not an altogether exact and definitive formulation of them. The reading and study of these documents gives one the distressing impression of assisting at the genesis of the Reformer.

Nevertheless, it would not be without interest to follow out the development of Luther's Marian ideas in these early writings. We must not expect him, of course, to propound in them a real and proper Mariology. We find him instead assailed by one central idea: the problem of salvation. Consequently, he painstakingly studies and analyzes sinful man; he divests him of everything except his sins and casts him into the blinding light of the justice and of the infinite sanctity of God, so that he feels himself corrupt to the bones and condemned; without hope he abases himself in the humble confession of his sin. Then Luther makes us turn our gaze towards the infinite Being and makes present to us the marvelous transformation of the formidable justice of God into the mercy and grace which saves. It is a grace which is personified in Christ, the God made man, who becomes our justice and our salvation, each time that we humbly confess our sin before Him and adhere to Him with humble and confident faith.

This is the central idea that Luther develops in a thousand ways and which he takes almost as a pretext from whatever occasion might suggest it to him at the moment. It is a concept no less simple than fundamental. About this elementary concept there radiate all the other ideas in so far as they serve to illustrate it, to clarify it, and to develop it further. These ideas are like satellites which serve to compose a system at the center of which there always remains, however, as the element of coordination, of cohesion, the sun of the Lutheran system: the intuition of justification by faith alone.

Among these satellite ideas there is also to be found the Marian conception. In the first work which we intend to examine, the

Commentary on the Psalms, it is presented above all as a symbol of that which occurs in the soul and in humanity through this salvific intervention of God in the story of mankind. Looking upon Mary we can see reproduced in her in an eminent way the history of our salvation and the function of the Church. Mary is manifested to us, therefore, above all as a symbol: the symbol of the Redemption and of the Church.

Mary, a Type of the Redemption

Psalm 84 extolls the liberation of the people of Israel from its enemies through the intervention of God, and begins: « Lord, thou hast blessed thy land: thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob ».

In the words penned by Luther, this entire psalm lends itself to a Marian interpretation. The land in the psalm which has been blessed by God is the Virgin Mary. The Holy Spirit, who is the very goodness of God, has blessed her, rendering her fruitful; and the fruit of this divine blessing is Jesus, the Son of Mary and of Mary alone, because born without the instrumentality of an earthly father.

But in blessing this land, continues Luther, God has in fact blessed the entire human race. Mary is « our land » as the psalm says: ours in the full sense of the word because of our race, and because the fruit of her virginal womb has extended its benefits to all of human kind.

The important conclusion which Luther himself draws from these considerations is that salvation — that is, Jesus — comes to us through Mary. It is here that the classic parallelism between Mary and Eve suggests itself spontaneously to Luther. « In fact », he writes, « as through Eve there came forth a malediction, and in her and with her that malediction has come upon the entire human race which came from dust ... thus through the Blessed Virgin, in her and by her, that malediction has been wiped out, and in its stead there has been granted a benediction ».

It would be difficult not to think that in this repetition of the prepositions *through* her, *in* her, and *with* her, Luther had in mind the words which the priest pronounces in the Canon of the Mass: *per ipsum et cum ipso et in ipso.* Luther sees clearly the place of the greatest importance which belongs to Mary in the Redemption at the side of her divine Son.

The parallelism between Mary and Eve continues: where Eve has generated children of death and death-giving fruit, Mary has instead generated the fruit of life and of salvation. In conse-

quence, just as all evil and our sinful actions come from Eve, so all our good and the acceptable actions which we perform come from Mary.

It is not easy to say to what extent Luther perceived the Mariological implications which a Catholic author could observe in these considerations, above all with reference to the intercession and the mediation of Our Lady. We cannot deny that an objective mediation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the work of the Redemption has been clearly affirmed by Luther: it is through her, *per illam,* that Christ the Saviour has been given to us. Whether, however, the mediatory role of Mary continues in the order of grace which we receive through the merits of Christ — that is, in the application of the Redemption to each of the faithful — is another question. The considerations which we will express later on genuine Marian devotion in the thought of Luther will serve to throw some light on this problem.

In any case, it is certain that this virginal land of Our Lady in which Jesus is born corporally is for Luther a type and symbol of what takes place spiritually in the Christian at the moment of his redemption. Then it is that Christ is born in us spiritually. Our bodies, made of earth, become the mystical temple of Christ, as the members of the Blessed Virgin were the temple of His physical body.

From this mystical union of human beings with Christ there is born a new people, which Luther calls the people of faith, that is, the Mystical Body of Christ and His Church. It is Christ himself who is always reborn in a second nativity, and just as Christ was born corporally from a Virgin and by the Holy Spirit, so also this new people — the mystical Christ — is born from the baptismal waters and the Holy Spirit.

Mary, a Type of the Church

This origin of the mystical Christ, symbolized in the origin of the corporal Christ in the virginal womb of Mary, brings us to a consideration of Luther's second parallelism: that which he draws between Mary and the Church. In truth, says Luther, as the Virgin has generated Christ according to the flesh, so the Church generates Christ according to the spirit — namely, the Mystical Body of Christ. This idea is taken up again in another passage where it is expressly stated that the holy Virgin was a figure of the Church which brings forth her children through the working of the Holy Spirit and by means of the seed of the revealed word.

This image is a very favorite one for Luther in this period, and he develops it under different aspects. « The most pure womb of Mary », he writes, « has given Christ His body, as the bosom of the Father has given Christ His divinity. He is thus God by reason of the Father, and man by reason of His Mother. But the Church, too, nourishes Christ within her womb in so far as she is the mother of the Mystical Body as well, and this womb of the Church is *faith* ».

It is at this point of our parallelism, indeed, that the central idea of the whole Lutheran system inserts itself: the concept of faith. It is faith which makes up the womb of the Church in which Mother Church brings to life the spiritual Christ in the person of the believing Christian. The bosom of Abraham, continues Luther in another passage, in which are received all the faithful and the members of Christ, is the consciousness of the faith of Abraham.

These two fundamental parallels between the divine operation which is effected in Mary and in the Redemption, and between Mary and the Church constitute the most important Mariological notions which come to light in Luther's commentaries on the psalms.

In the matter of dogmatic affirmations, it is evident that for Luther Mary is a virgin, the Mother of God, and in a certain sense also our Mother. In the field of symbolism she is the most perfect example of what takes place in us at the moment of justification as well as being a type of the Church. When Luther wishes to develop the parallelism which he has established between Mary and the Church, the concept of faith is brought into relief on the first level, while all the rest recedes into the background: it is faith which nourishes the Christian, which redeems him, which effects within him both justification and redemption.

It will have been noted, however, that in all this an important element has been passed over, if not perhaps implied — the element of Marian devotion, of a filial piety towards the Mother of the Saviour. The picture which Luther draws for us of Mary, even though not lacking in certain delicate touches, is one that on the whole impresses one as being cold, almost lifeless. It reveals perhaps the basic defect of remaining — a picture: an objective representation of that which comes to pass in the meeting of the human with the divine in the history of the human race and in the spiritual reality of each individual. Mary is certainly the prototype of this confrontation. The nothingness of man and the entirety of God are eminently symbolized in her. But Mary never reaches down from this picture to extend a friendly hand

to man in his anxious search for God. The dialogue between man and God, always uppermost in the commentary on the psalms, is carried on solely between the isolated soul in the nothingness of its own sin and God who condescends mercifully towards it, attains to it through Jesus Christ, and saves it. At that instant, which is essentially a moment of faith, there is reproduced in it all that came about typically in the immaculate womb of the Virgin Mary at the moment of the Incarnation. But its relationship with Mary, at least if we were to limit ourselves to Luther's exegesis of the Psalms, would seem to terminate at this point. Thus, the Mariology of Luther would seem to consist almost essentially of a Marian typology.

In defence of Luther, it may perhaps be said that a university chair is not, in the large majority of cases, the place most adapted for the pursuit of piety. Consequently, we shall have to follow Luther from his professorial chair to the pulpit, in the old church of the Castle of Wittenberg, annexed to the university, in order to hear how he speaks of Mary to the faithful.

We find ourselves by now towards the year 1516. It is a time when Luther is overburdened by an accumulation of offices which have been entrusted to him. He describes them for us in a letter dated the 26th of October, 1516, written while the plague was raging at Wittenberg. He has been appointed as vicar of his district and has under his jurisdiction eleven monasteries. The voluminous correspondence entailed by his position and his personal contacts oppress him. He is still continuing his lectures on the Bible and is about to begin his explanation of the Epistle to the Galatians. In addition he has been assigned as preacher in the parish church. Luther concludes by saying that he rarely finds the time to recite his Breviary and to celebrate the Mass. And to all this there are added anxious internal struggles: the temptations provoked by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Luther's audience in the parish church is composed for the most part of good and simple peasant folk; and from the pulpit he boldly communicates to them the fundamental ideas which during the years of his teaching have been maturing in his mind. These concern primarily his vision of Christianity: the essential and unescapable sinfulness of human nature has by now become for him an established truth — especially after his lectures on the Epistle to the Romans in the years 1515-1516. For him concupiscence itself is sin. Similarly, he has almost completely formulated his doctrine on justification by faith and by imputation — a justification which one must always implore from God because in everything that we do, we sin. Thus it is that he wishes, first

of all, to incite in his hearers the sense of sin, to convince them that they are never without sin before God; that they are never truly and internally justified and are always in need of His justification. The attitude which he wishes to create in them is therefore one of humility in the awareness that God is all and that man is nothing but sin.

In view of this, Luther in his sermons develops Marian typology in an eminently practical and moral sense, and a third kind of Marian symbolism comes to be joined to the two that have preceded: Mary as an example of humility.

To this end Luther prefers to take as his point of departure the *Magnificat,* the canticle in which Mary offers us a singular example of humility and of gratitude towards God who has worked great things in her. Luther dwells on this note with particular lengthiness in a sermon preached on the day of the Assumption in 1516, and he takes the occasion to condemn the Catholic doctrine of merit: « Behold », he says, « what the glorious Virgin teaches us by her example; what genuine doctrine of real humility and of pure gratitude does she not reveal to us! She vaunts no merit on her part, no deed, and confesses herself to be but passive, as a mother and as the recipient of good works and not as a doer (of them) ».

The Christian who regards his own merits before God is, according to Luther, in practice a pagan. He puts his trust in himself, in what he has done, and not in God, and therefore commits the fundamental wrong of idolizing himself. Even Mary is void of merit.

Marian Devotion

Nevertheless, precisely in this context we find one of the rare positive allusions to the intercession of the Mother of the Saviour, and one of the few invocations of Luther to Mary:

« It is through her », says Luther, « that the fruit of life has been communicated to us; with greatheartedness she has served us and continues to serve us ... O most worthy Virgin, be mindful of us, and grant that also in us God may accomplish these great things ».

This is the first element of Marian devotion which strikes us here as almost new and unexpected. A second aspect which is developed in the same sermon that we are considering seems to us to possess an even greater weight and to be more in accordance with the general teaching of Luther:

« We must observe », he says, « that the Blessed Virgin has

prophesied of herself that she would be called blessed by all generations. It is an appropriate thing that a Christian, moved by a pious regard towards this Virgin, should rejoice with her, should congratulate her, for it is by her that we have received the fruit of life ... » Marian devotion should be, therefore, above all a cult of praise in view of the great gifts with which Mary has been endowed.

In order to determine at closer range the nature of these two aspects of veneration for Mary — invocation and praise — it would serve our purpose to examine briefly the explanation of the Ten Commandments given by Luther to the people of Wittenberg from June of 1516 to February of 1517. In fact, the sermon of August 15 represented in reality an interruption in this series of homilies, occasioned by the great feast day of the Assumption.

In this course of exposition of the Ten Commandments, Luther expresses his mind clearly as to what point he would concede the veneration of the Saints and of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It would be idolatry, pure and simple, he affirms, if one were to invoke them for merely material advantages. On the other hand, the most excellent cult, that which would be pleasing and acceptable to God, is that of praising God in His saints, and of regarding and meditating in them the effects of divine grace and to feel moved by the infinite goodness which has deigned to bestow on them so many gifts. « We must », says Luther, « perceive the fragrance of divine grace poured out upon His saints and by drinking in the drops of His goodness be inflamed with the love of God. Indeed, what are the saints if not drops of dew ... upon the head of the spouse »?

It is this very thing that constitutes the sacrifice of praise to God in His saints. Having fulfilled this, declares Luther, one can then proceed to ask for graces; asking the Lord, in the first place, to grant us the gifts which he has bestowed on His saints, and lastly, temporal graces as well « if indeed one can ask for temporal graces who thirsts for spiritual things ».

Catholic tradition, thus, retains a certain influence upon Luther. But this influence makes itself felt ever more feebly. In the last sermon which it remains for us to consider, that of Easter 1517, Luther laments that many feel for Mary, as he says, an affection which is too earthly, too much in conformity with human sentiment. He remarks, as well, that Christ showed himself rather severe towards Our Lady, according to what is related in the Scriptures.

Luther, too, will become ever more reserved with regard to Mary. In the years that follow, the place of Marian doctrine in the Lutheran scheme of things will become more and more restrict-

ed. Certain elements of Marian devotion which still survived almost like foreign bodies, by the force of inertia, as it were, and never fully assimilated, will be decisively rejected. In this work of elimination Luther is led by the fundamental principles of his own doctrine: the denial of merit and of the value of good works for justification, the affirmation of the absolute exclusiveness of the mediation of Christ (in the Lutheran sense), and justification by faith alone. The intercession of Mary and her mediation in the distribution of graces to the faithful will have to be completely abandoned. The only cooperation of Mary in the redemption of the human race remains in the fact of having given birth to the Saviour. But to think that Mary is instrumental also in the bestowal of the fruits of salvation would be contrary to the exclusiveness of the mediation of Christ. In consequence, the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary must assume only the form of the praise of God. Luther would not have the *Ave Maria* be a prayer or an invocation, but only a hymn of praise in the scriptural sense. One must not say to Mary: « Pray for us », for her prayer has no more value than that of any other Christian. That which is of value in Christianity are not good works, not even the divine Maternity, nor the Virginity of Mary, but faith. And even we have faith, even though to a lesser degree than that of Mary. We are therefore practically equal to her.

The divine Maternity of Mary remains a tenet in Lutheran theology, but her role of cooperation terminated when she had accomplished her work of caring for the divine infant. From then onwards Mary becomes a follower of Christ like all the others. Luther will indeed always defend the Virginity of Mary, although he would not wish to draw from this an argument for the legitimacy of virginity in the Christian way of life. Mary will remain for Luther above all a symbol and an example: a figure of the Church, of the faith, and of humility. She will likewise remain our Mother: when we believe, we enter into an intimate relationship with her Son, and thus we become her children as well.

To our way of thinking, Luther's Mariological doctrine seems to contain a contradiction: how is it possible that the Virgin Mary, from whom he admits that we have received everything, whom he recognizes as our mother, could constitute — as Luther would have it — a great danger to Christianity? The danger for him would be found in the idea that to invoke Mary is equivalent to a gross neglect of God: that for Mary to be involved in the affairs of men or to intercede for their salvation would amount to a denigration of Christ, to a taking away of something from the unique value of the redemption wrought by Christ.

It is not difficult for us to perceive in all this a painful misunderstanding. And yet this misunderstanding still subsists today in so many of those who have been born and brought up Protestants and have accepted, with more or less important modifications, the faith of Luther. Generations of Catholics have attempted over the course of four centuries to clarify this and other misapprehensions for their Protestant contemporaries. Our own generation, as well, perhaps more than the preceding ones, has taken this ecumenical dialogue to heart. The fact that the error subsists and still has deep roots among our separated brethren makes us all the more convinced of the basic truth that, in order to lead others to the faith, discussions and clarifications, however necessary they may be, are not enough. The decisive part in this endeavor to convince minds and hearts depends upon the grace of God.

DINO BELLUCCI, S. J.

PROTESTANTS AND THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

At first glance, one might be inclined to quarrel with the title of this study. The Ecumenical Movement, it may be objected, is something which, by general usage and acceptance, is predominantly, if not exclusively, Protestant and therefore the specification of Protestants *and* the Ecumenical Movement seems tautological and useless. There is, however, profound wisdom in particularizing the Protestants in the United States and dealing with their relation to the Ecumenical Movement. This is so because, in the first place, Protestantism in the United States has an outstanding position in the world of Protestantism. Indeed, one high ranking Protestant churchman has recently affirmed: « Politically the mid-twentieth century is characterized by the contest for world hegemony between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Ecclesiastically, however, there is no counterweight to the extraordinary wealth and vitality of the American Churches » [1]. A second and more cogent reason for paying special attention to American Protestantism is that the process of its development has been unlike the history of Protestantism in any other country, and it is this special formation which has had a unique influence on the Ecumenical Movement as it now exists in the United States. A clear understanding of the Ecumenical Movement and its characteristics in America necessarily stems, therefore, from a knowledge of some pertinent aspects of Protestantism.

Characteristics of American Protestantism

The first and most obvious characteristic of American Protestantism is its fragmentation. Charles Clayton Morrison, who for many years edited the American « undenominational » weekly, *The Christian Century,* has declared that, « The fissiparous tendency which has characterized Protestantism throughout most of its history has run riot in the United States » [2]. A visitor to the European countries of England, Germany, France, and Switzerland

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[1] Eugene Carson Blake, « The American Churches and Ecumenical Mission » in *The Ecumenical Era in Church and Society,* (A Symposium in honor of John A. Mackay), edited by Edward J. Jurji (New York: Macmillan, 1959), p. 75.

finds that the Protestantism in each nation follows, at least generally and preponderantly, the particular type which was initiated by the reformers, Cranmer, Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli. On the other hand, a visitor who walks down the main street of any American city will see, often within a very limited area, a multiple variety of different Protestant churches representing many nationalities and covering every shade and tinge of Protestantism from the Church of God (Abrahamic Faith) Adventist Church and Two-Seed-In-The-Spirit Predestinarian Baptists to the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Even within the same denomination there may be many separate bodies. There are, for example, 27 Baptist bodies, 21 Methodist bodies, 14 Mennonite bodies, and 10 different Presbyterian bodies. The *Yearbook of American Churches*[3] for 1960 lists a grand total of approximately 250 different religious bodies in the United States.

The religious fragmentation in America is a fact and a characteristic of Protestantism in the United States today. Yet the number and variety of denominations should not be ascribed to some sort of quirk in the character of Americans as though they simply formed a new religious body at a moment's notice to suit their fancy. There are a number of causes and conditions deep within the history and growth of the United States which aptly prepared the soil for such a multiple division and which themselves reflect the nature of Protestantism in America. We may discern four.

It is a matter of paramount importance in the study of religion in America to note, first of all, that the United States began as a group of colonies settled by Europeans. Immigrants from Great Britain and the Continent formed the backbone of the new nation that arose across the sea. Who were these people and what kind of religion did they bring with them? Assuredly, they were children of their age. They were strong-minded and self-willed individuals, products of the seventeenth century which was itself characterized by wars of religion, enforced conformity to existing church-state establishments, religious persecutions, intolerance, and exile for the sake of religion. Such activities and such attitudes allowed for little religious indifference. Rather they made for violent differences in religion and a jealous clinging to the par-

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[2] « The Ecumenical Trend in American Protestantism » in *The Ecumenical Review,* (Vol. III, no. 1), October, 1950, p. 2.

[3] (Issued September, 1959), edited by Benson Y. Landis, published by The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

ticular forms of belief that groups of people chose for themselves. Puritans, Baptists, Quakers, Mennonites, Dunkers, Moravians, Schwenkfelders, and others preferred to leave home and travel three thousand or more miles to a new and uncivilized world rather than give up their ways of worship.

When these groups arrived in America, it was not likely that they would give up easily what they had come so far to preserve. Protestantism in the United States began, then, on a foundation of numerous denominations carried over from Europe. Donald Herbert Yoder, commenting on this fact in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement,* declares: « The major reason for the fragmentation of American Christianity is that all the European schisms have been transplanted to American soil »[4].

In addition, explains William Warren Sweet in his book, *The Story of Religion in America,* the men who transplanted denominationalism in the colonies were liberal in both their political and in their religious views. Not only were they dissenters from the established religion but they were equally dissatisfied with the existing political order. Such tendencies, held down in the old world by law, authority, or public disapproval, grew and expanded in the new world where there were few restraining forces. Long established institutions — social, political, and religious — were absent. During the entire colonial period there was no high ranking church official in America who might have exercised a moderating influence. As a result, Mr. Sweet affirms: « By the time of the Revolution the people of America possessed a larger degree of freedom in religion than was to be found among any other people. They had carried on the freest debate on all religious questions without regard to bishops, priests, councils or creeds, thus encouraging an individualism in religion such as existed nowhere else »[5] One may add that the American Revolution itself by its very success in throwing off the political domination of England further increased the tendencies already present for freedom in religion. Political independence paved the way for greater religious independence.

A second force on the American scene which has influenced the denominational fragmentation of Protestantism and which also has its roots in the colonial period is the principle of separation of church and state. Although a number of the original immigrants to America came for the sake of getting away from the enforcement of a state religion, by the opening of the War for Independence there

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[4] Edited by Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954, p. 221.

[5] New York: Harper and Bros., no date, p. 3.

were state established churches in nine of the thirteen colonies. Congregationalism was established in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut; and Anglicanism in New York, Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. Baptists led the fight for disestablishment. They were helped by such statesmen as George Mason, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry. Because of the sovereignty of the individual colonies in such questions, the struggle had to be carried on and won in each colony. However, victory was assured when, in its very first session the First Congress of the United States, on September 25, 1789, adopted a Bill of Rights which included in the first article the declaration, « Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. »

The intention behind the principle of separation of church and state as framed by its designers and as passed by its champions in the First Congress was definitely not to encourage indifference to religion. Its object was rather to prevent the establishment of any state religion which would be given special preferences and enforced by law. This can be clearly seen from the original draft of the law submitted to Congress by James Madison on June 8, 1789: « The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner or on any pretext infringed »[6]. In the argument which followed the introduction of Mr. Madison's measure, the desire of the legislators to avoid indifference was even more clearly stated.

The authors of the principle of separation of church and state evidently intended to protect and ensure the free exercise of religion. They did indeed effect a certain equality among the various denominations in the colonies. No single church was favored or helped by the state, and on the other hand the adherents of each and every sect or denomination were free from governmental coercion and allowed to worship God as they pleased. The result was an inherent vitality that gave a large measure of strength to the American churches. At the same time, however, the principle of separation of church and state immediately opened the way to a further serious weakening of solidarity and unity. It was easy for people to confuse extrinsic freedom in religion with intrinsic freedom. Because men were free from compulsion to support or to conform with any particular religion, they felt that they were also free « ... to profess

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[6] Quoted from the *Annals of Congress*, Vol. I, p. 319 by George E. Reed in *The National Catholic Almanac* (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony's Guild, 1959), p. 649.

and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion ... » [7]. In other words, people tended to act as though such intrinsic demands as objective truth, the will of Christ, and the unity of faith simply did not exist because the government did not forbid them to form what denominations or sects they wanted.

The result of such thinking was inevitable. As the United States expanded from the original thirteen colonies to the present fifty states, the number of religious bodies has increased and multiplied fantastically. The principle of separation of church and state, by creating the atmosphere for unrestrained freedom of religious expression has contributed much to the fragmentation of Protestantism in America [8].

A third force on the American scene that has had a tremendous influence on the proliferation of Protestant denominations was the extension of churches to keep pace with the expansion of the United States from coast to coast and from Canada to Mexico. As the population moved westward from the eastern part of the country where the colonists first settled in the seventeenth century, it was the task of religion to follow the always moving and restless march of men toward the setting sun—over the Allegheny Mountains, across the Ohio and Mississippi River basins, over the wide plains of the Midwest, and finally through the passes of the Rocky Mountains to the western coastal plain and the Pacific Ocean.

It is difficult to picture the vastness of such an undertaking. Within the relatively short span of little more than a century (i. e. from 1800 to 1920), the churches had to keep pace with a population boom of 100 million people. Added to this was the problem of assimilating millions of immigrants. Nor was the task limited to one particular area. It covered the whole of continental United States, an area of approximately three million square miles. As the population moved westward with increasing strides it was the task of the churches to build houses of worship, schools and universities, and provide the necessary equipment for the religious needs of the people. Moreover, the huge work was accomplished under frontier conditions: natural obstacles presented by tremendous distances, vast forests, large stretches of desert; mountains, rivers, and plains;

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[7] Law in the Colony of Virginia, quoted by Sweet, op. cit., p. 192.

[8] Cf. « This endemic conviction, which was written into the Constitution of the United States in the First Amendment, is certainly not to be deprecated as a hindrance to Christian unity. ... But the principle of religious freedom certainly contributed to the religious pluralism of American society ».

« Christian Unity in North America », J. Robert Nelson in *Christian Unity in North America*, (A Symposium edited by J. Robert Nelson, St. Louis: The Bethany Press), p. 21.

storms, drought, disease, and the general lack of many of the simplest artefacts of civilization.

Under such conditions two consequences almost inevitably followed. In the first place, because of the distance between small groups, little settlements, and even larger cities and the consequent self-contained existence the people led, it was only natural that they would tend to set up local, independent churches. Denominations such as the Mennonites and the Dunkers, which were transplanted to America from Europe, divided and redivided as they moved westward. Recent studies show clearly that the multiplication of small sects took place chiefly in the Middle and Far West during the period of settlement of these areas.

Secondly, a new technique had to be developed to turn people to God, and this was revivalism. It must be noted that from very early times in America the lower classes had little to do with religion. « Even in Puritan colonies », declares William Warren Sweet, « only a comparatively small proportion of the total population were members of the church, while in Virginia at the opening of the eighteenth century not more than one in twenty were church members, and the proportion was undoubtedly smaller in the other southern colonies. Thus there came to be more unchurched people in America, in proportion to the population, than was to be found in any country in Christendom [9] ». When we add the difficulties of bringing church-life to people on the frontier and in newly settled areas far from organized religion, it can readily be seen how some radical methods had to be used.

Revivalism, which was active in America from the second half of the seventeenth century, reached a peak in the nineteenth century and is still strong in the twentieth. Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists were chiefly engaged in revivalist meetings. A Presbyterian minister in Kentucky at the beginning of the nineteenth century has written an eyewitness account of one meeting which was attended by a crowd estimated from 10 to 25 thousand people.

> They are commonly collected in small circles of 10 or 12, close adjoining another circle and all engaged in singing Watt's and Hart's hymns; and then a minister steps upon a stump or log, and begins an exhortation or sermon, when, as many as can hear collect around him. On Sabbath I saw 100 persons at once on the ground crying for mercy, of all ages from 8 to 60 years [10].

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[9] Op. cit., p. 5.

[10] Rev. John Evans Finley, writing in the *New York Missionary Magazine* (1802), and quoted by Sweet, op. cit., p. 229.

The results, generally, were considered good. Another witness of the time declares:

> On my way I was informed by settlers on the road that the character of Kentucky travelers was entirely changed, and that they were remarkable for sobriety as they had formerly been for dissoluteness and immorality. And indeed I found Kentucky to appearances the most moral place I had ever been. A profane expression was hardly ever heard. A religious awe seemed to pervade the country. Upon the whole, I think the revival in Kentucky the most extraordinary that has ever visisited the church of Christ; and all things considered, it was peculiarly adapted to the circumstances of the country into which it came [11].

However, revivalism also produced some difficulties. A number of ministers were opposed to the « fervor, noise and disorder » of the revivals. In many places the struggle between those for and those against revivalism was settled by the simple expediency of setting up a new denomination. In this way the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the New Light Church, a number of Disciple congregations, the United Brethren in Christ Church, and the Evangelical Association, among others, were formed. Once again, as in other cases, differences led to denominations.

A fourth reason for the fragmentation of American Protestantism was the Civil War between the North and the South (1860-1865) fought to do away with the institution of Negro slavery. It is not necessary to go into the various factors that divided the United States into two hostile camps. Slowly but surely over the course of time opposite sides were drawn on what was considered by the denominations as primarily a moral and religious issue, and the partisans of each side accordingly pursued their cause with religious zeal. The result was inevitable. Just as the northern and southern states separated politically, so the denominations, particularly the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, split ecclesiastically to form new divisions. Moreover, since the War and its aftermath produced a bitterness against the Negroes that is still strong today in the southern states, a further separation has taken place in the churches. In many places the Negroes have their own denominations and churches.

There is no doubt that the primary characteristic of Protestantism in America is its pluralism. A number of reasons have been

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[11] Quoted by Sweet, op. cit., p. 231.

given for the growth of denominationalism so that the reader may see that although there can be no sufficient justification for the divisions, yet the multiplication of churches is not as totally illogical as it may seem. Just as the historical, social, and economic movements, whether good or bad, of any country and any age can trace their origin to certain contributing causes and conditions, so too any given religious situation has its roots in certain political and social as well as theological factors which to a great extent explain at least the present state of things if not being an adequate justification for its existence. In other words, even while not agreeing with the multiple divisions of Protestantism, one can see how they logically came to be when the conditions of their genesis are understood.

Besides religious pluralism, Protestantism in the United States has another outstanding characteristic. It is a social activism. The activism is easy to understand. No country the size of the United States can advance to such a state of excellence in population, in industry, in wealth, in its contributions to many fields of human endeavor without tremendous activity. To accomplish what America has done in a relatively short space of time demands such activeness. It is easy to see this. Perhaps Protestant activity in social matters is harder to understand. At least Catholics sometimes look upon Protestantism as something which is more inward than outward, more given to attempts at personal experiences with the divine, more involved with the principle that faith and not works justifies. But either by historical formation or peculiar temperament or both, such is not the case for American Protestantism.

Protestantism in the United States is highly interested in people. For many years the mark of membership in a Protestant church has been personal contact with the minister and with the other members of the congregation. Since most congregations are comparatively small such contact is not difficult to maintain. Various types of recreational, social, and educational gatherings besides regular religious meetings and special services held under church auspices increase the feeling of togetherness. Many times a church has little to offer in the way of doctrine or a consistent theology, but it does offer a satisfying degree of fellowship and of personal interest in the individual that is eminently attractive to an American living in a secularized and machine age.

Moreover, apart from the down-to-earth contact with its church members, Protestantism is highly organized in both interdenominational and denominational councils on every level: national, state, and local. These councils have both paid and voluntary employees

and engage in manifold activities. To take a typical example, the *Yearbook of American Churches 1960* lists the following departments under the Council of Churches for the city of Flint in the state of Michigan: Business and Finance, Christian Education, Christian Life and Work, Protestant Committee on Scouting, Special Services, Christian Missions, Public Relations, United Christian Youth, United Church Men, and United Church Women. Under the heading of Christian Education there are subdepartments for Adult Work, Audio-visual Resources, Children's Work, Home and Family Life, Life and Leadership Training, Michigan School for Deaf Training, Student Work, Vacation Church School Institute, and Youth Work. Other departments have similar break-downs into particular activities.

The above is an example of what is being done in only one city. Similar activities to a greater or lesser extent are found all over the United States multiplied endlessly perhaps and in some cases without appreciable religious significance but indicating very clearly that Protestantism is a socially active religion in America.

A third characteristic of Protestantism at the present time in the United States is the uneasiness or nervousness that is accompanying a transition for Protestantism from a position of primary influence in society to a secondary or lesser position. When the American colonies were first settled the inhabitants were predominantly Protestant. Although from the very beginning of its history America has had a number of Catholics in its midst, the overwhelming majority of the population for a long time have been Protestant. The large number of churches appearing in every city and town and the numerous church-goers made it easy for Catholics and Protestants alike to consider America as a Protestant country. People measured things against a general backdrop of Protestantism as the dominant cultural force of the country. What was not Protestant in tone or sympathy was looked upon as alien and non-American. Protestants, while divided among themselves, were nevertheless united in the confidence that the United States was their domain. True, this dominion was unofficial because of the principle of separation of church and state implanted in the Constitution, but it was none the less real and secure.

In the course of time, however, a change has taken place in the position of Protestantism as the number one religious influence on American society and culture. Fr. Gustave Weigel, S. J., treating of this change, says that up until 1914 the claim that America was Protestant was unchallenged. With the advent of World War I and the emergence of Catholicism as a national and world power, a number of people began to realize that Protestant supremacy

was not as strong as they had thought. « In such a climate the Protestant claim to directive authority was challenged both by Catholics and non-Catholics. With the challenge made, Protestant inviolability was destroyed. The Protestants were suddenly reduced from the position of a dominating majority into the role of a large minority » [12]. Realization of the new status of Protestantism in America has come about slowly; such changes do not take place overnight. Some do not see it yet, and others do not wish to admit it. For a number, however, the picture is clear. Martin E. Marty, a brilliant Lutheran scholar, for example, has stated that: « Protestant America is as obsolete as the side-wheel showboat, the cigar-store Indian or the Fourth of July oration » [13]. We live in an era, he declares, which is correctly designated as « post-Protestant »: the old shape of American religion was basically Protestant; the new shape is not.

What are the reasons for this change? Dr. Marty gives two: a weakening of Protestantism from within and a lessening of power from without. The inner reason is the widespread acceptance of the view that only what all the Protestant churches hold and teach in common is really relevant for the well-being of society and the state. Since such doctrines or tenets are few, the « cutting edges of the Protestant witness » have been dulled. Theological vigor and distinctive testimony, says the Lutheran scholar, have been sacrificed to accommodate the view of religious freedom.

The other reason for the weakening of the Protestant position has been the large scale introduction of Jewish and, more particularly, Catholic immigrants into American life. In 1860 there were approximately four and one half million Catholics in the United States. The *Yearbook of American Churches* for 1960 puts the number of Catholics at 39,509,508. Protestants still outnumber Catholics, but the ratio is now 3 to 2. From an insignificant minority at the beginning of American history, Catholicism has risen to a position of quasi-equal status.

Yet the concern of Protestants over their changing condition from being a dominant group to simply a large number is not so much the fear that Catholics are taking over the country. There is some of that and it shows itself periodically in various

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[12] Cf. « The Temper of Protestantism Today », an address given at the National Conference on Convert Work, October 22, 1958, Washington, D. C. and printed in *Techniques for Convert Makers,* (Paulist Fathers), April, 1959, no. 136, p. 4.

[13] « The New Establishment » in *The Christian Century,* October 15, 1958, p. 1177.

forms of protest against Catholics and the Catholic position. However, the deeper concern of thoughtful Protestants is that a generalized national religion is taking the place of Protestantism as a major cultural factor. A popular interest in religion is becoming a substitute for historic Protestantism. America is getting « religionized » — something far different from being committed to the Christian faith. Protestantism in turn is adapting itself to its cultural environment and showing itself as little more than a sanctified version of democracy and of what has been called the « American way of life ». In the process Protestantism is losing its positive substance.

ROGER MATZERATH, S. A.

(*To be concluded*)

A CATHOLIC VIEW OF THE Y. M. C. A.

The Young Men's Christian Association was founded in London on June 6, 1844, by George Williams, a Congregationalist and son of a prosperous south English farmer. It grew out of meetings for prayer and Bible reading that Williams held among his fellow-workers in a London dry-goods establishment. Although similar groups had been founded earlier in Scotland, the distinctive feature of the English movement was a combined interest in social and religious welfare, comparable to William Booth's Salvation Army but favoring a higher economic level of society. Progress and growth were phenomenal. In less than five years, the Association had spread to half a dozen countries in Europe and America. When the first world conference was held at Paris in 1855, delegates were present from ten nations and centers were organized in the major British colonies, including Australia and the Levant.

After more than a century of corporate existence, the Y.M.C.A. and its affiliated women's society have become an international agency of moral influence that some have compared to the Roman Catholic Church and others, with more plausibility, have called the most powerful force in the ecumenical movement. Operating in eighty countries and centralized under the World Alliance at Geneva, the Y.M.C.A. has become (according to Emil Brunner) the spearhead of a modern lay apostolate, led by « those who preach the Gospel, not because they are appointed to do it, but because they feel an inner urge to share the best they have and know with those who do not yet know or have it » [1].

It would be a mistake to undervalue the spread of this message on a world scale and, from the Catholic viewpoint, to ignore the essentially Protestant character of its principles.

Theological Norms

Any study of the doctrinal orientation of the Y.M.C.A. must begin by examining the proceedings of its first international conference, held at Paris, where the « fundamental principle » of the Association was drafted and unanimously accepted as the lodestone of its religious policy.

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1 *Forward Together*, 1950, p. 8.

The closing session of the conference was held on August 22, 1855, at the Wesleyan Chapel on Rue Royale, where three years before the members of the Paris Association had made their vows of consecration and adopted the constitution. After devotional exercises, the President « read the acts of the Conference in relation to the alliance as drawn up by the committee appointed for that purpose ». The texts of the alliance are extant, in French and English, with enough difference between them to require explanation.

Under title of *Alliance des Unions Chrétiennes de Jeunes Gens*, the assembled delegates declared that « conscious of the feeling that our associations are all laboring at the same task in the same evangelical spirit, and aware of our duty to manifest this unity, while preserving complete independence in organization and modes of action — we propose that our respective societies unite in a Confederation on the following fundamental principle, which shall henceforth be obligatory on every Union desirous of entering the Alliance. The purpose of these Christian Unions is to reunite in one association the young men who, considering Jesus Christ their Savior and God according to the Sacred Scriptures, wish to be His disciples in their faith and conduct, and to associate their efforts for the extension of their Master's Kingdom among [other] young men »[2].

If we compare the French and the English texts, the variants are considerable and more than once have proved embarrassing to English-speaking commentators. Though the English draft was made the same day and, apparently, under the eyes of the full delegation, it changes and omits certain phrases in the original French.

The English text is silent on « laboring in the same evangelical spirit », and says simply that the Y.M.C.A. seeks to *unite* young men, in one association. Where the English more loosely declares the principle to be the *basis* of admission, the French explicitly makes it *obligatory*. And on a minor note, the French speaks of becoming Christ's disciples in *faith*, whereas the English (unexpectedly) refers to discipleship in *doctrine*.

Since the French version alone is authentic, its emphasis on the « evangelical spirit » in context means « Reformation attitude », and the hope of reuniting men of various Christian persuasions was born of the heavy sectarian influence which plagues the Protestant denominations.

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[2] *Conference Report*, Paris, 1855 (French edition), pp. 20 f.

Historians of the Y.M.C.A. have pointed out that the Paris assembly built better than it knew. Its fundamental principle, as Nils Karlström has said, « became classical in the Ecumenical Movement ». In 1895 it served as basis for the World's Student Christian Federation, and in 1898 for the World's Young Women's Christian Association. It later became the keystone of the Faith and Order Movement and through it for the World Council of Churches.

To insure further clarity on the meaning of the Paris basis, before the Conference adjourned it published a commentary statement that leaves no room for doubt. There are three fundamental principles which characterize and unite the Association. « These are the same in every Union », namely, « personal, evangelical, and vital christianity. Protestant Catholicity, or union of all denominations upon the common basis of the Christian faith. Christian fraternity, or union of young men of every class of society for one common object ». In practice, however, « we ought to concentrate our efforts on these two principal objects: *Natural Edification* and the *Conversion of Young Men to God* » [3]. The first refers to the spiritual influence that members should exert on one another, the second concerns the evangelical outreach affecting other people who come into contact with the Y.M.C.A.

Ecumenical Theory and Practice

In the century since it was founded, the Association has been variously described by its own leaders as non-denominational, interconfessional, or trans-sectarian. Always in Association literature we find the note of freedom from attachment to any religious body and a disclaimer of trying to substitute for existing religious institutions. « No competition exists between the churches and the Y.M.C.A. The explicitly religious work of the churches is complemented by the institutional programs of the Y.M.C.A. ... No church today considers itself a Young Men's Christian Association and persumably none seeks to be one ... The Y.M.C.A. is not a church. It has never sought to be one » [4].

These and similar protests against the charge of being a religious sect under disguise are made so often by the highest authorities that we may take them as official policy. The trouble is that many people, especially Catholics, are unfamiliar with another and deeper side of this issue. True the Y. M. C. A. is non-sectarian

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[3] *Conference Report*, Paris, 1855 (English edition), pp. 121 f.

[4] *Report of Committee on Religion in the Y. M. C. A. Program*, Athens, Greece, 1952, Private Printing.

and makes no pretense of substituting for church affiliation where a person already belongs to some ecclesiastical body. But without competing with the churches or replacing them, the Association on principle is committed to melting the differences that separate the Christian denominations, in the spirit of ecumenical movement.

Underlying the movement, as conceived by its founders and confirmed by Association leaders, is the set conviction that no one church in Christendom possesses the fulness of truth. All are approximations, and it is the duty of Y.M.C.A. members to recognize this fact and put its implications into salutary effect. In the words of the first Paris Conference, « We have, in regard to the Church, one ruling principle. This principle is to work, not for the spread of any particular view, but for the Church of God, which, in the present day, is subdivided into special churches. We regard these divisions everywhere, not as really separating us into distinct societies, but merely as manifestations of the one evangelical Church. We do not believe in separate churches; we acknowledge only one Christian Church which at present is divided into sections ».

Sectionalism is a « source of collision among the brethren » and of « scandal to the world ». To remove this blight from Christianity is the ambition of the Young Men's Christian Association.

> It is our deep and earnest conviction that it is the duty of Christians to aim at the restoration of the unity of the Church.
>
> We may be asked: But how is the unity of the Church to be restored? By reciprocal and enervating concessions, as in Prussia? We answer, Never; but by agreement resulting from our common progress. There is in each Church some truth better understood by it than by others, and which often constitutes its strength. Our Association, composed of members of each of these Churches, naturally embodies all truths. Each one striking his own note alone produces discord; we wish to produce harmony by their proper combination [5].

During the hundred years since these sentiments were expressed, the Y.M.C.A. has become a potent, some would say the most effective, force in modern non-Catholic ecumenism. Every phase of Association activity and its whole juridical structure is geared to promoting a mosaic of religious truth. This is strikingly illustrated in the lives of two ecumenical leaders, John R. Mott,

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[5] *Conference Report*, Paris (English edition), pp. 96-101.

Secretary and President of the Young Men's Christian Association for over sixty years, and Willem Visser 'T Hooft, Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. and its progeny, the World's Student Christian Federation, from 1924 until his appointment in 1938 as General Secretary of the prospective World Council of Churches.

Born at Livingston Manor, New York, in 1865, John Mott became student secretary of the International Committee of the Y.M.C.A. at the age of twenty-three. Shortly after assuming office, he saw the need of coordinating that segment of the youth which, in his judgment, offered the highest potential for Christian unity. Accordingly in 1895 he founded at Vadstena, in Sweden, the World's Student Christian Federation to bring together the existing student organizations of the United States, Great Britain, the Scandinavian countries, and Germany. Chosen as its General Secretary, Mott remained in that position for twenty-five years. The purpose which he formulated is still the guiding charter of the World Federation.

> To unite student Christian movements or organizations throughout the world.
>
> To collect information regarding the religious conditions of the students of all lands.
>
> To promote the following lines of activity: to lead students to become disciples of Jesus Christ as only Savior and as God; to deepen the spiritual life of students; to enlist students in the work of extending the kingdom of Christ throughout the whole world[6].

In 1910, at the historic Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, Mott headed the first of its preparatory commissions, presided at most of the sessions, and became chairman of the Continuation Committee which he promoted and whose original charter he drafted. For the first time in Protestant history, this action recognized the importance of a world interdenominational body which could function between conferences, and led eleven years later to forming the International Missionary Council, a pioneer in the movement for Christian unity in its world outlook. Mott served as the first chairman of the I.M.C. from its inception in 1921 until 1941, meanwhile continuing as President of the World's Committee of the Y.M.C.A.'s. As with the Student Federation so here, his main interest was to create « movements towards unity and cooperation in the mission field », on the premise that « Mis-

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[6] John R. Mott, *The World's Student Christian Federation,* New York, 1920, p. 5.

sionary Societies throughout the world must be in as close communication as possible with one another » [7].

All the while he was heading the international Y.M.C.A., Mott was prodigiously active in fostering (some have said, fathering) the future World Council of Churches. Preparatory to the first Conference on Faith and Order, at Oxford, he directed the Advisory Council which coordinated the agenda. At the Conference in 1937, he presided as chairman and then was chosen head of its Business Committee. A year later, at Utrecht, he became Vice-chairman of the Provisional Committee for the projected W.C.C., and at the first assembly in Amsterdam served as one of the Presidents of the World Council.

It is almost impossible to exaggerate the contribution, covering over fifty years, made by John Mott to the ecumenical movement while directing the Young Men's Christian Association. To an unusual degree he combined a deep religious faith, evangelistic zeal, the capacity to discern ability in others, power over public assemblies and compelling, convincing speech. Most of his dozen published books deal with Christian unity, and his six volumes of addresses and papers read like a commentary on his favorite quotation, « that they all may be one ». Even the proposed merger of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, voted at Ghana in 1958, is only putting into effect an idea conceived at the turn of the century by the first chairman of I.M.C.

Much the same story, only less dramatic, could be told of Willem Adolph Visser 'T Hooft. At the age of twenty-four he became Secretary of the World's Committee of the Young Men's Christian Associations. Following in the footsteps of John Mott, he then served as General Secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation, while actively cooperating with the unity efforts set in motion by his predecessor.

He made himself indispensable at the Life and Work meeting in Oxford by co-authoring a volume on the *Church and Its Function in Society* for use by the delegates; and the same year (1937) he played so prominent a rôle at Edinburgh that no one was surprised at his appointment in Utrecht (1938) as General Secretary of the provisional committee for the later World Council of Churches.

Visser 'T Hooft paid a glowing tribute to the contribution made by the Young Men's Christian Association to the non-Catholic ecumenical movement. It was Henri Dunant, one of the founders of the Association, who first caught the spirit of modern ecumenism and passed it on to his followers. Dunant spoke and wrote of

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[7] *World Missionary Conference*, vol. VIII, 1910, p. 144.

the function of the Y.M.C.A. « to propagate the ecumenical spirit which transcends nationality and language, denominations and ecclesiastical questions, class and profession », and described the term *ecumenical* as characteristic of the Young Men's Christian Association, which insists that « Christians of different denominations can and must unite in love, associate with each other, and work together in charity for the glory of God, while maintaining their individual liberty and even their right to defend, if necessary, but with tolerance and charity, their personal points of view and their particular religious convictions » [8].

Here, says Visser 'T Hooft, clarified in Dunant's words and crystallized in the Young Men's Christian Association, « is an extraordinarily original and substantial definition of the ecumenical spirit ». Unlike Roman Catholicism, with its accent on universality as a historical fact, « ecumenical is interpreted in a substantial and spiritual rather than in a formal and spatial manner », where « the point of reference is not the secular *Oikoumene* (already existing), but the Church Universal (still to be established) ». No doubt, in the middle of the nineteenth century « the time was not ripe for a general acceptance of this conception ». But after one hundred years of practical acceptance in the Y.M.C.A. and allied organizations, the « old etymological sense » of ecumenical has finally given way to a new meaning « to embrace at one and the same time the truths that the Church of Christ is world-wide, supra-national, supra-racial; that it is essentially one and that this oneness contains a variety of gifts » capable of uniting otherwise disparate churches into a single *Ecclesia Christi* [9].

In the dozen years of his tenure as General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Visser 'T Hooft has done much to promote the acceptance of this concept of *ecumenical,* to a point where many consider him one of the creators of the World Council and declare themselves « humbly proud to be inheritors of such a crusading tradition ».

Relations with the Catholic Church

Parallel with its ecumenical outlook, the Young Men's Christian Association has maintained a fairly consistent policy towards Roman Catholicism. Catholics as individuals are welcome and

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[8] Clarence Shedd, « Henri Dunant et les Y. M. C. A., » *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève,* 1949, pp. 230-231.

[9] W. A. Visser 'T Hooft, *The Meaning of Ecumenical,* London, 1954, pp. 21, 27.

invited to participate in Association activities, but the Catholic Church is considered an alien.

One of the earliest conflicts that arose from this ambivalent attitude occurred in Spain in the late 1800's. An impulsive and headstrong zealot, Francisco Albricias of Barcelona, spent three years (1881-1884) touring the principal Spanish towns and organizing Y.M.C.A. groups as centers of Protestant evangelization. Before long he was involved in several lawsuits, stemming from his opposition to the Catholic Church, with imprisonment and heavy fines pending.

In spite of the animosity he aroused, the central Executive Committee supported Albricias and encouraged him in the foundation of a newspaper, *El Atalaya,* for distribution in Spain and Latin America, and the eleventh World Conference of Y.M.C.A.'s praised the Iberian venture. But in 1889 the experiment had to be dropped. The financial deficit arising from this unsuccessful excursion into Spain hung heavily on the budget of the Central International Committee for several years, and was only eventually covered by special collections made in Switzerland. To this day, Spain is one of the few major countries without a national representation in the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations.

Frequent skirmishes with the Catholic hierarchy in Italy, Portugal and Austria were the logical outcome of missionary zeal, projected in Y.M.C.A. books, Bible classes and prayer meetings; and of ecumenical ideas expressed in such features as a general Communion service for Protestant delegates to World Conferences of the Association.

However, it was not until 1920 that a Vatican directive clarified the Catholic position and provoked a series of administrative actions and statements that suggest how seriously the attitude of Rome is taken by the Association. The letter of the Holy Office was addressed to all bishops. After stating that certain organizations are doing great harm to Catholic youth by drawing them away from the faith under pretext of affording opportunities for physical culture and education, the instruction identified the Y.M.C.A. as a prime offender. « No doubt it boasts a sincere love for youth, as though it had nothing more at heart than their bodily and mental welfare. But at the same time it attacks their faith under the pretense of purifying it and of giving them a better knowledge of the true way of life, ' above all churches and apart from any religious creed ' » [10].

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[10] *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* vol. XII, p. 595 (Nov. 5, 1920).

Reaction from Association officials was prompt and vigorous. In his opening address at the Copenhagen Plenary Meeting of the World's Committee in 1922, the President of the World's Alliance, Paul Des Gouttes, challenged the Roman declaration and reiterated the traditional Y.M.C.A. policy:

> We must never lose sight of our chief purpose. While broadly interconfessional and interdenominational in principle, our Associations must closely distinguish, at the risk of falling into error and final collapse, between the young Catholic who is sincerely seeking Christ and the institution which places the priest between him and his God. The aims being different, the roads lie parallel and the one will never meet the other. We must no longer lull ourselves with dangerous and fatally deceptive illusions. There is no understanding possible with an institution with which agreement means absorption, and which proclaims as its dogma: « No salvation outside the Church » [11].

Four years later, at Helsingfors in Finland, the nineteenth World's Conference spelled out the interconfessional cooperation which characterizes Y.M.C.A. activity. Two forms of ecumenism were proposed to the delegates, a minimal kind which holds « only what is really common to all Confessions, and leaving out all particular tenets of various Churches », and a maximal type « in which every Church brings in the full expression of its faith ». Only the latter, it was said, can avoid that religious poverty which is in greatest opposition to God's richness. The practical question of deciding « how far such an interconfessional basis can be realized » must be settled by the respective national Associations, and internationally, by the World's Alliance [12].

As far back as 1927, the Y.M.C.A. director in Poland prepared a study for the World's Alliance, in which he plainly stated that so far as the Polish situation is concerned, « we are practicing a form of interconfessionalism in three areas of contact », namely, 1) in the local Associations, which are largely Roman Catholic, but in which Protestants also are members and directors; 2) in the National Movement, where a few leaders are Protestants; and 3) in contact with the World's Alliance, all of whose processes are Protestant.

The dilemma thus proposed was obvious. If the Polish Y.M.C.A. comes into the World Alliance, where everything is Pro-

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11 Clarence P. Shedd, *History of the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations*, London, 1955, p. 699.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 700.

testant, how can local Associations be represented or equitably directed; if they remain independent, how maintain their Y.M.C.A. character? Instead of solving the problem, it was shelved by not formally affiliating Poland with the World Alliance.

Since the issues at stake concerned the whole status of Association policy as regards Catholic membership, negotiations were finally opened with the Vatican, and in 1953 (April 12 to 19) several conferences were held in Rome between Y.M.C.A. officials and Catholic representatives, including Cardinal Ottaviani, and Monsignors Bernardini and Montini. Early the next year, a communication was received through the Apostolic Delegate in London, indicating that the Vatican considered « the well-known Instruction of the Holy Office » as still valid and equally pertinent to the present situation; that, consequently, it would be useless for the Polish petitioners to make a further request to the Holy Office, unless they changed their name and their Association, making it in effect Catholic and detaching itself completely from the International Organization. Poland, like Spain, is still not officially subject to the World Alliance.

Although the problem of Catholic affiliation was not solved on a contractual basis, it produced an objective, and to date the most authentic, declaration on the subject emanating from the Executive Committee of the Young Men's Christian Associations. It was necessary and wise, the Committee stated, « to make such an approach as had been undertaken to the Vatican, even though the result might well be completely negative ». No single crisis in the annals of the Association had been more significant:

> It was recognized that at this moment in the history of the World's Alliance, every endeavor must be made to maintain and enlarge our sympathy with our Roman Catholic friends, our resolve to stand by them, and our determination to extend to them our unreserved confidence and support; and also to maintain quietly and consistently our loyalty to the interconfessional principles and purposes of the World's Alliance which had been the result of such thorough and continuous development in recent years, as well as to our deepest convictions and experiences of the guidance of the Holy Spirit [13].

There the matter rests from the side of the Young Men's Christian Association, which continues to flourish and expand its facilities along social lives, with a new emphasis on the missionary

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[13] *Report and Resolutions of Executive*, Mainau, 1954, p. 141.

apostolate, as in Latin America, or on the ecumenical ideal, as under the aegis of the National Council of Churches in the United States. From the Catholic viewpoint, the issue has become clearer than ever before. In America, Cardinal (as Archbishop) Meyer told his people that membership in such organizations as the Y.M.C.A., even though it be taken out merely for the sake of recreation or for the use of athletic facilities, « carries with it a compromise of one's own faith in the one true Church of Christ by becoming a member of a non-Catholic religious organization ». And the Philippine hierarchy, in a joint statement, declared that « the Y.M.C.A. is a Protestant organization and, as such, should be avoided by Catholics, that is, no Catholic may be a member of this organization or contribute to its support or lend his name for propaganda purposes, or make use of its facilities » [14]. More than a century of theory and practice warrants these severe measures.

JOHN A. HARDON, S. J.

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[14] *Canon Law Digest* (Bouscaren and O'Connor), vol. IV, 1958, p. 370.

COMMENTS AND DOCUMENTS

A Letter of Cardinal Montini for the 1960 Octave of Prayer

Among the members of the episcopate in the Catholic world who are noteworthy for the interest which they have manifested in the cause of Christian unity, certainly one of the most outstanding is Cardinal Montini, Archbishop of Milan. From his earliest years of service in the Vatican Secretariate of State, he has always shown a particular concern for this problem; and from the beginning of his administration of the archdiocese of Milan, he has made this concern felt to those under his pastoral care.

This year again, Cardinal Montini issued an exhortation to his clergy and to the faithful of Milan to participate actively in the Octave of Prayer for Unity. We are presenting below in English form the major part of this important letter.

To take an active part (in the Octave of Prayer) means above all to understand that religious unity is something of the highest value. We could be tempted to forget this truth — and even to deny it. We no longer have that fascinating conception of unity as an attribute of reality, as a law of life. We are inclined to consider unity as uniformity, as something static and oppressive; and we direct our sympathy rather to diversity, to multiplicity, and even to division and opposition, as being happy and fruitful effects of liberty. Furthermore, our ineptitude in referring ourselves to an objective norm of thought, especially in the realm of religion, brings us to consider as equivalent the discordant opinions of men; and the necessity of a free and pacific coexistence with all makes us almost prefer a religious indifference or a sceptical irenicism which declares as good and equal all religions and which extinguishes, as though it were importune velleity, every apostolic concern, every missionary zeal. The modern mentality educates us insensibly towards a renunciation of the spiritual unity of the world, and insinuates into us the suspicion that the affirmation of a religion which is positive, exclusive, and organized as is that of Catholics, brings about divisions and contrasts rather than cohesion and unity among men.

It is our duty, therefore, to restore within ourselves a veneration for unity.

That the world is spiritually divided and that it possesses neither the strength nor the pretext of providing itself with the thought of unity is a phenomenon which we should observe with singular respect, but with great pity. It is precisely in this phenomenon that we can see the origin of so many evils that run through modern society: its profound discord, its travail in organizing itself in orderly fashion, its poverty of ideas and of enthusiasm, its intrinsic unhappiness, because deprived of that communion of spirit that creates the interior joy of a society, together with its nobility and its strength.

Nor should we pretend to bring about the unity of thought, and much less so of religion, by external coercion of any kind. This we are persuaded of by the very nature of a religious act, which must be free, personal, interior. Consequently, we must be both tolerant and patient.

But that the unity of religion is a good thing, a supreme good, of this we should ever be convinced. And if it is a good thing, which must be favored by word and action, then we shall have to oblige ourselves to that mode of action which we generally term as witness, education, propaganda, and apostolate.

It should be enough to convince ourselves of the excellence of such a blessing by remembering that religious unity corresponds to the designs of God, to the will of Christ. Even our own natural wisdom should lead us to a certain religious unity; but in practice it is incapable of attaining it. It is Christian revelation which is the source of religious unity. For whoever has the fortune and the responsibility of admitting the Revelation of the New Testament — intended for all mankind — unity becomes a necessary thing; its attainment becomes the key problem of civilization. The one Christ is the point of reference which calls out for the convergence of all men. It suffices but to recall the words of St. Paul: « I exhort you to be ... careful to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, even as you were called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one Baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and throughout all, and in us all ». (Ephesians, iv, 1-5).

Unity belongs to the genius of Christianity. Unity is an essential property of the true Church: unity of faith, of charity, of authority. It is a gift of Christ to humanity, already realized in its essence, but in continuous becoming in its historical realization. It is likewise a stimulus on the civil plane of the union

between peoples, a source of true peace, a profound sense of civilization.

If all this is so, it is incumbent upon us who are the fortunate participants of this unity to learn to appreciate it the more, to live it better. If Catholic unity, precisely because it is founded upon religious coefficients, is extremely respectful towards the entities which are called to share in it — persons, nations, cultures, etc. — it wishes nevertheless that our sollicitude be directed towards the *rapprochement,* the uniting of men among themselves — and not towards their separation and their mutual opposition. All that smacks of particularism, of exclusivism, or of egoism must be corrected and overcome in whoever possesses the Catholic sense through a clear conception and resolution of humility — and this as concerns privileges, nationalism, race, language, etc. Particular rights and interests must not be esteemed by us in such a way as to constitute a normal argument for division and discord. Even the most irreducible and unimpeachable value that faith is, and with reference to which men are so profoundly divided, must be accompanied by an enduring charity, ready to commiserate, to pardon, to invite, to give. Faith does not constitute religious egoism, just as charity is a religious irenicism.

To these ideas we must educate ourselves ever more earnestly. It is this that should be the first fruit of the Octave which is now engaging our minds: a love for unity, the practice of those virtues which it calls into play, the practical application of unity within the framework of our Catholic life — so often lacerated by dissension over temporal things and so weakly professed — and this with that vigor and contentment of which it should be the spring. And if among ourselves as Catholics we should be united with that fullness of sentiment and of virtue, we would be better disposed to visualize how important the problem is of the return of separated Christians to the unity of the Church. We would understand them better; we would edify them the more, and we would invite them more earnestly.

And finding that we can do practically nothing for the solution of such a problem, we would pray all the more. The prayer for unity must be a prayer that springs from love and from the practice of unity, which is in itself the highest expression of charity, as we see in the sublime prayer of Christ: « That they all may be one » (John 17, 21).

Finally, with an appreciation of the effort of faithful souls to create this harmony and to express it in fervent prayer, we extend our benediction to all those who, in these days, are celebrating with us and with the entire Church the mystery of unity.

An Interview with the Ecumenical Patriarch

In its issue for the 27th February, the Roman newspaper Il Popolo *carried an interesting interview which its correspondent, Vittorio Citterich, had with the Patriarch Athenagoras after the latter's return from a visit to the Near East. Given the Patriarch's important position in the Orthodox world, the views which he expressed with regard to prospects for the unity of Christians would be of real interest to the readers of* Unitas. *We are therefore reproducing the relevant part of the interview as follows*:

Patriarch Athenagoras was for a long time the spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox community in the United States and from there he has brought with him to Constantinople that single-minded sincerity which, together with an instinctive respect for the ways of the East, has resulted, to a certain extent, in a new state of balance and perhaps even in a new practical mentality that fairly well explains the Patriarch's initiatives with regard to the problem of Church unity. A number of his recent addresses have contained, as we know, a repeated emphasis on the « necessity » of the unity of Christians, and some of his gestures of sympathy towards the Catholic world seem to have been connected to a very marked degree with the proclamation of the next Ecumenical Council. Moreover, with an expression which, to say the least, is uncommon for the leader of a Christian community separated from Rome, the Patriarch of Constantinople publicly termed Pope Roncalli as « a man sent from God whose name is John ».

Athenagoras keeps referring insistently on these matters. Last month (January) he was in the Near East to visit all the Orthodox Patriarchs and to appeal for that unity envisoned for the forthcoming council. These same concepts he repeats likewise in his contacts with the Orthodox clergy, almost with insistence, with the accentuation of one who wishes to impose with authority a theme that has been too long neglected and of one who, availing himself of his own prestige, wishes to break down the wall of preconceived mentalities and of that kind of ecclesiastical patriotism which has been so widely diffused among the autocephalous churches of the East after the schism.

This is a delicate undertaking, the evaluation of which is not easy and which therefore counsels abstention from every hasty judgment. Leaving aside for the moment those problems which are strictly dogmatic and theological, the fact remains that these friendly gestures of Athenagoras have brought with them an undeniable psychological effect, especially in the Greek Orthodox

world which has been so traditionally bound to psychological reactions.

The Patriarch is certainly well aware of the design according to which he has directed his activity, and he says so with genuine and intelligent affability: « The important thing today is to understand that we are brothers, to grasp the essential. We have, in the main, the same priesthood, the same sacraments. We adore the same God, and the same Redeemer who has saved us; and if with the assistance of Our Lady we are worthy, we shall one day all be together in the same Paradise ... The rest can be left to the theologians whose special task is to clarify certain matters. Besides, these things are not inextricable if it is true that at Florence in 1439 the theologians found a way to settle them ».

Athenagoras then takes up a large volume in English (by a Catholic author) on the Council of Florence, thumbs the pages with a thoughtful sigh, and then looks at his interviewer as if to say: « There, a book like this proves that I am right ». The book is to be seen on his work desk and appears to have found a fixed place next to a large and beautifully bound Bible.

The theme of the book leads the conversation of necessity to the subject of Catholicism. In 1439 Florence was an open door in the direction of Rome, but before long political factors prevailed, Constantinople fell, and the door closed once more. The Patriarch pulls out the drawer of his desk, takes out a small case of dark velvet, opens it and displays a gold medal with the likeness of the Pope. « Someone », says Athenagoras, « presented me with this gift, and I consider it as one of the most precious things here where I work every day. I did not know John XXIII personally when he was in residence at Constantinople but from that time everyone here in the Patriarchate has genuinely loved him; he is esteemed and respected. It is important to know people. In any case, as far as Pope Roncalli is concerned, it suffices to follow his discourses, to understand his gestures, to imagine his love for the Eastern Church. He is indeed the man sent from God. It is this that touches our soul and inspires our hope ».

Looking at this venerable old man who speaks with so much warmth, with youthfulness of spirit, it is easy to conclude that it is completely natural for a Christian, for a Patriarch, to feel keenly in his soul the wound inflicted by the division of believers which contradicts the prayer of Jesus to the Father: *ut unum sint*.

But to this fundamentally religious outlook of Athenagoras, there are perhaps associated other motivating elements in keeping with his culture, which is very extensive, and with his interest in the historical events of our day. To his mind, the need for

unity is not simply a religious fact separated from the very exigencies of contemporary civilization.

« The world is proceeding inevitably towards a unification of fact », affirms the Patriarch, « because it is impelled in that direction by the progress of science and of technique, by the vertiginous annihilation of distances, by the inevitable integration of economies, the very necessity of a political coexistence between the opposing world powers which, unable to declare war against one another are already giving signs of an eventual agreement. Can Christians, in the midst of this movement in which men are being drawn towards unity, give occasion for scandal by their disunion? By being thus divided, are they not perhaps losing an unrepeatable historical opportunity of giving a Christian character to the unity which is being brought about and which will be otherwise accomplished without them and against them? ».

* * *

A Documented Study of the Protestant Situation in Colombia

The readers of Unitas, *we feel, would like to be correctly informed as to the existence — or the lack of it — of what our Protestant brethren have termed « the persecution of Protestants » on the part of Catholics in Colombia. Over the years impressive figures in this regard have been reported in the press; from eighty to one hundred Protestants, it is alleged, have been put to death for their beliefs. On two occasions, after having read about two such cases in the Ecumenical Press Bulletin of Geneva, I requested precise information about them from reliable sources in Colombia and received in return unquestionable documents which demonstrated the falsity of the accusation in both instances.*

Father Edward Ospina, S. J. has recently published a study of this question in general, and we believe it most opportune to present our readers with an abridgement of it. His conclusions can be summed up thus: in these last ten years, there have been killings in Colombia and, unfortunately, in large number; nevertheless, they have been the effect not of religious conflicts but of political ones. Among those killed there have been Protestants, but many more Catholics by far. Here and there some less serious incidents have taken place for religious motives, but provoked by the accusations of Protestants against the Catholic faith, and principally against the Mother of God whom Catholics call their mother as well. In any case, the Catholic bishops in Colombia have reproved any kind of violence. (Editor's note).

The summary of Father Ospina's book (1) *follows*:

Protestants admit that before 1948 there were no complaints of « religious persecution » (Cf. the Bulletin of the Evangelical Confederation of Colombia, February 1952, no. 2; also Aug. 1953, no. 10, etc.).

Now, from 1948 onwards, the country has been profoundly disturbed by a violent unleashing of pent up political passions, always more spirited in a people of ardent temperament. On April 9, 1948, while the Ninth Pan-American Conference was going on at Bogotà, the leader of the left wing of the Liberal Party, Giorgio Eliecer Gaitán, was assassinated. According to a set plan, the lines of which in time became sufficiently clear and which made it possible to ascertain the ones who were really responsible (the Communists), the revolt against the government broke out contemporaneously in many parts of the country. After the duration of a week, the insurrection was barely able to be checked, thanks to the fidelity of the army; but it was not possible to rid the country of the criminal element which, taking refuge with military and police deserters in the farthest provinces, in the inaccessible tropical jungles of the « llanos » organized itself into armed bands and gave rise to that political brigandage which took on the name of « bandolerismo ».

It is difficult to compute the number of victims of this criminal element because complete statistics have not yet been available. None the less, it can be safely affirmed that, if in these last ten years the victims have reached the number of 80,000, they have been practically all Catholics. Protestant sources have published that John Coy (who was killed on October 29, 1957) was the eightieth « Protestant Martyr » (Bulletin, *Reports on Religious Persecution in Colombia,* n. 43, Dec. 10, 1957). This would mean that Protestant casualties have amounted to but .01 per cent of the victims. It is to be noted, likewise, that John Coy was put to death not for religious but for political motives (Cf. *America,* March 8, 1958, page 657).

At the end of 1949 the Protestants in Colombia made their complaints known to the civil authorities in view of the wrongs inflicted on some of their correligionists. In consequence, the minister of Justice named a commission to make the relative investigation. We know of the activity of the commission from a letter written on March 13, 1950 to the director of the Department of Safety by the secretary of the Presbyterian Mission, Mr. Robert W. Lazear. That letter read in part:

« I cannot help but manifest to the Director that I am completely satisfied with the attention shown by Dr. Munoz ... I can in-

(1) *The Protestant Denominations in Colombia*: Bogota, National Press.

CAREY S. THOMAS LIBRARY
DENVER CONSERVATIVE BAPTIST SEMINARY
3401 S. UNIVERSITY BLVD.

form you, Mr. Director, that he did his duty to the utmost, leaving nothing to be desired. I am very much convinced that the actual Government is watching after the great freedoms of democracy, among which perhaps the greatest is that of freedom of conscience and religion ... ».

From 21 to 25 June, 1950, there was held in Bogota the First Constituttng Assembly of the « Evangelical Confederation of Colombia » (CEDEC), in which nineteen denominations took part. This Confederation has for its scope the « amalgamation into one single official corporation, representative of the Evangelical bodies which are working throughout the national territory ». (Letter of Joseph D. Fajardo, president, and of Robert W. Lazear, secretary of the CEDEC to the government minister, Louis Ignatius Andrade, June 1950).

The Assembly which took place in June 1950 also set up a permanent secretariat, and subordinate to it, an Investigating Committee. The members of this committee « combed country places and other areas afflicted by religious violence, interviewed persons of all classes ... In the archives of the CEDEC are to be found more than a thousand signed declarations and very many photographs which reveal to what a degree of cruelty and vandalism the persecution of Evangelical Christians reached » (F. Ordonez, *Historia del Cristianismo Evangélico en Colombia,* Cali, 1956 p. 357).

In reality, however, the facts of the matter fall into two classes:

A) Genuinely serious occurrences: confiscation of goods, arson, murder, etc. The motivation is not religious, but political.

1. The time covered is that of the civil war. Colombian Protestants recognize that before April 9, 1948, their activity had not encountered such obstacles; and yet the government had been in the hands of Catholics, the ecclesiastical hierarchy had been the same and had issued identical directives; and the Catholics themselves, according to the executive secretary of the Confederation in a statement made on March 23, 1952, had been even more fervent than today.

2. The acts of violence, in almost their totality, took place in those regions most infested by the « bandoleros ».

3. The persons accused of having put Protestants to death belonged, in many cases, to the armed forces, the action of which was directed not at persecuting anyone for religious reasons, but at weakening « bandolerismo ».

All this, in fact, is reported in the Bulletins of the CEDEC:

Bulletin no. 1, Case 16: An Adventist wounded by the police on the 11th of January, 1952 at Quebraditas, Santander.

Case 22 in the same Bulletin: An Evangelical chapel burned by two policemen on February 15, 1952 at Hoyo Negro, Tolima.

A house belonging to Evangelicals burned by the National Police on February 25, 1952 at Aguachica Santander.

Bulletin no. 1 (August 17, 1953) reports: « From 1948 to 1953, 110 elementary schools have been closed, 54 of them by order of the Government; 51 Protestants have been assassinated, 28 of them by the Police and by the Army ».

Some Protestants do recognize, at least in part, the political nature of the acts of violence. According to statements made by Dr. A. Rambao to the Council of Churches in the United States (C. W. Taylor, *The Persecution of Protestants in South America*: Chicago, pp. 4 and 5), the persecution in Colombia has been worse than in Spain, precisely because of the political elements involved. Dr. Rambao says further that Colombian Protestants, by the very nature of things, align themselves more with the Liberals than with the Conservatives, and that some Protestants have been killed because they were Liberals.

B) Other incidents of lesser importance have been provoked by the aggressive propaganda of Protestants.

The fact of this propaganda explains (however much it may not justify) certain reactions on the part of simple, and perhaps even ignorant, folk, but not insensible to offences committed against what they hold as sacred. The following may serve as examples:

« Roman Catholicism — the antithesis of genuine Christianity » (*El Heraldo Bautista,* Cali, Sept. 1949, p. 8).

The Catholic Hierarchy has been « condemned by the Gospel, is a real monstrosity in the kingdom of God, a great tower of Babel erected by audacious and cunning men to obtain control over the whole world » (ibid. October, 1949, p. 3).

« The papal system is none other than the greatest invention of Satan, by means of which the coming of the antichrist is being prepared » *Roma y los Papas, Resena histórica,* Cali, p. 191).

« History demonstrates clearly that (the Pope) is the ' man of sin '. He is the most astute, the most sinful, and the most blasphemous being in Christendom who has ever appeared on this earth ... Serving himself of the triple crown and assuming the title of Supreme Pontiff, the Pope has shown himself to be the most blasphemous man on earth; and the people were permitted to greet him as ' Our Lord God the Pope '... Papal Rome is successor to Babylon and to pagan Rome and carries with it the unmistakable signs of antichrist ... The devil raised up the Pope to govern the western part of the reconstituted Roman Empire and Mohammed to govern the eastern part ... (*De Sima a Cima*, July 1949, p. 4).

« Romanism is the wild beast of the Colombian mission field », according to the Reverend James C. Holden, a Methodist who claims to have worked at Garagoa, Boyaca and whose severe criticism of the Catholic Church appeared in an article published in the *Western Voice,* Englewood, Colorado, on September 15, 1954.

The sacraments are dealt with in similar fashion; the divinity of Christ and His resurrection are denied; the Virgin Mary derided, and Catholic doctrines and the Mass scorned.

The bulletins issued by the Evangelical Confederation of Colombia (CEDEC) are issued on an international scale. In one number the readers were informed that only two copies of each issue are mailed in Colombia itself: one to the President of the Republic and the other to the Papal Nuncio. It was further stated that copies of each number of the CEDEC bulletin are sent to the following persons or organizations: the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations, the Organization of American States (O.E.A.), the Pan-American Union, the President of the United States and his Secretary of State, the World Council of Churches, etc. The information printed in the bulletin is, from all indications, obtained orally by its editor whose only sources are his correligionists, excluding thus the possibility of reporting data from the Catholic side. The effect of such information, both materially and psychologically partial, is undeniable. Furthermore, the refutations made by Catholics with documentary evidence have never been published. Protestant groups, likewise, have ordinarily sought to avoid or refuse inquiries conducted by government officials; and yet such interventions had taken place even before the bulletins began publication and had been regarded with full satisfaction by Protestants themselves.

The status of Protestants in Colombia is regulated by a concordat drawn up in 1887, articles 25 and 31 of which stipulate particular agreements regarding mission territory. The concordat made provisions for opportune modifications which eventually were made in 1902, 1928, and finally on January 29, 1953. In view of the latter revision, officials of the Government, on September 3 and on October 24, 1953, sent to the different governors, magistrates, and special commissioners two circulars (nos. 5,106 and 4,793 respectively) which determined the residence of non-Catholic foreigners in mission areas. The circulars made three principal specifications:

1) Non-Catholic foreigners resident in Colombia enjoy rights guaranteed by the Constitution and may not be disturbed in the practice of their religion.

2) In mission territories non-Catholic foreigners may not carry on proselytizing activities.

3) If such foreigners wish to remain in the above-mentioned territories as private individuals, they may continue to enjoy the guarantees of the Colombian Constitution.

Concluding Observations

After due examination into the reasons which may explain why Protestants give such wide publicity against Colombia, it seems to us that three principal motives may be discerned:

a) Protestants (and here we refer to those sects which seek to proselytize in Colombia) have found an unexpected resistance to their attempts to penetrate the mass of the Colombian people, and this resistance has aroused in them a kind of exasperation. In this connection it must be noted that the main promoters of this publicity are foreigners; native Colombians are simply their collaborators. Foreign missionaries come to Colombia with a « dominating complex »; they believe themselves to be of a superior race and as belonging to the most developed nations in the world, and meeting with unexpected opposition, they grow quite impatient. They should reflect that a people that reacts vigorously in defense of its faith is not a people that is as weak in faith as they believe and say. Thus, they seek support in the « pressure of world opinion », and for this they draw on sensational reports which are very often exaggerated or even invented.

b) When one observes the aggressive kind of propaganda, the terms with which they refer to the Catholic Church, and the incredible extremes to which they resort in attacking her, he is led to believe that they harbor sentiments of aversion — and perhaps even of hatred — for the Church. They are actually far from the reality of the Catholic Church and wish to remain so. Their knowledge of her is based on prejudice, legend, the distortions of an anti-Catholic education, or else gained from deficient and tendentious information furnished by those won over from the Catholic side. Doubtless, when one takes this background into account, their psychological attitude is for the most part explicable and — who knows — excusable before God. Nevertheless, this error on their part does have tragic consequences and is calculated to stir up ill-feeling in religious circles — a sentiment that darkens the intellect and morally impairs personality.

c) In this instance, one may note another motive that continues to make its influence felt and which leads Protestant leaders to insist on publicizing any political or religious conflict as a further

argument that « religious persecution » is still continuing in Colombia: having once launched this extensive campaign of publicity, Protestant groups feel obliged to sustain their position and thus justify themselves in the eyes of the world.

* * *

The Patriarch of Moscow and the World Council of Churches

At the last meeting of the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches at Buenos Aires in February, the delegates present voted in favor of promoting additional contacts with the Russian Orthodox Church. These would consist in further exchanges of visits and documents; and in arrangements whereby Russian theological students could attend lectures at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland, and Russian observers could sit in on meetings sponsored by the W.C.C.

It will be remembered that in December 1959 *a World Council delegation of five members headed by Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft visited various Russian churches and were received by the Patriarch of Moscow, Alexius. On that occasion the Patriarch delivered an address which is noteworthy for its reflection of the mind of other Orthodox Churches vis-à-vis the problem of Christian disunity. The text of that address as reported by the Ecumenical Press Service is as follows*:

We are glad to welcome the dear guests of the Russian Orthodox Church, our brethren in Christ, representing the Christian churches united around the World Council of Churches, on Russian soil at the altars of ancient Orthodox shrines.

The Russian Orthodox Church looks on with sympathy at the efforts of our Christian brethren to overcome centuries-old divisions and to reunite men who worship God in different ways for working together in God's field. Our Church will help them in that task.

Studying your already considerable achievements in that good work has been to us a source of consolation and deep spiritual satisfaction. We shall invoke God's blessing upon your efforts in the future. We shall strengthen our spiritual friendship while endeavouring to reveal to you the treasures of our ancient faith transmitted to us by the Apostles and Fathers of the Church.

You have had the opportunity of seeing yourselves the piety and devoutness of the faithful people of God in our filled churches. You have been able to see how important liturgical life and common prayer is to us, Orthodox Christians. Our strength lies in the

sacraments of the Church through the mystery of which comes the unseen but the real presence of the Lord Himself among us.

This remains perhaps beyond the comprehension of those observers who, seeing the Russian Church from outside, express their astonishment because of her vitality. That strength does not come from ourselves. It proceeds from the quickening grace of the Holy Ghost, and is due to the guidance of Divine Providence leading Christ's Church by ways inscrutable, known to God alone; thus we believe that separation of our church from the state has been accomplished for the good of the church.

The relations of the Russian Church with the Christian world at large, beyond the boundaries of our country, have been strengthened in recent years. Bonds of fraternity and friendship have been tightened with Christians of all denominations.

Our Church welcomes and supports in the contemporaneous world all things that help to strengthen world peace, to improve mutual understanding between men and to build human society on love, freedom, and justice.

We witness with great satisfaction that much has been done in this respect. Still more could be done in the future if all men of good will should unite their efforts in this direction.

Remaining above all in communion of prayer and canon law with our sister-churches, the autocephalous national branches of the Universal Orthodox Church, we pray for the re-union of all Christian churches. We are induced to do so by our Lord's commandment about oneness of men in the bond of peace and love.

That is the supreme goal of the World Council of Churches. And, as its General Secretary, Dr. Visser 't Hooft has stressed, the World Council of Churches is not a « World Church » and its purpose is to promote unity exclusively by spiritual means and with full recognition of the independence and particular charisma of each Church and each creed. We trust that the day will come when all may be one, when our Saviour's promise will be fulfilled: « and there shall be one flock and one Shepherd » (St. John, X, 16).

ECUMENISM AND REUNION

World Council Executive Committee Meets at Buenos Aires

The first major meeting in Latin America of the World Council of Churches took place in Buenos Aires when its Executive Committee met there for its regular session from February 8-12. The twelve-member committee, which was presided over by Dr. Franklin Clark Fry of New York, held its semi-annual meeting in the Argentine capital to determine a work program for the World Council's 172 member churches belonging to Orthodox, Anglican, and Protestant confessions.

Among the most important decisions taken at the meeting were those concerning the third Assembly of the W. C. C. which is to take place in New Delhi in 1961. The committee officially confirmed the date for this important event as being from November 18 to December 5, 1961. The sessions of the Assembly will be held in the conference hall of Vigynan Bhavan which was constructed by the Indian Government for a conference of UNESCO a few years ago. Of the 1000 participants expected to attend, 635 of them will be delegates with an active vote.

The theme of the coming Assembly will be: « Jesus Christ, the Light of the World ». This will be studied beforehand in all the local parishes of the member churches of the World Council, together with three subsidiary themes: witness, unity, and service.

(The two previous Assemblies of the World Council took place at Amsterdam in 1948 and at Evanston, Illinois, in 1954).

At the meeting in Buenos Aires, the committee members also approved blueprints for the construction of a new headquarters building for the W. C. C. at Geneva. The new unit, which will cost $ 2,500,000, will be situated in the vicinity of the United Nations building. Work on the new structure is expected to begin in the fall.

At the close of the sessions of the Executive Committee, a concluding religious service was held in the Church of St. Andrew in the capital city, at which time the African delegate from Ghana, Dr. Peter K. Dagadu made an eloquent appeal for the attainment of Christian unity. Perhaps the chief obstacle to the evangelization of Africa, the preacher affirmed, was the fact of sectarianism. « Is

the Church really one? » he asked. « Is not this fact obscured by what we see about us? »

In the course of the committee proceedings a good deal of emphasis had been placed on the importance of increasing contacts with the Orthodox Church and other churches in Russia. Reports were also read which revealed an ever growing number of informal discussions between officials of the World Council and Roman Catholic experts on matters of Christian unity.

These contacts were particularly stressed in an interview following the sessions by Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary of the W.C.C. « I am personally convinced », he said, « that it is good to have these informal relations with Roman Catholics. We need a great deal of frank speech on several questions, but it is better to do this in small groups than in some great public debate ». (*EPS*)

* * *

Lutheran Federation Inaugurates Study of Catholicism

In a broadcast on the Danish radio, the prominent Lutheran theologian, Professor K. E. Skydsgaard has announced that the Lutheran World Federation has just inaugurated its new project of interconfessional research with an inquiry into the Roman Catholic Church of the present day. The purpose of the study is to evaluate Lutheran Christianity since the Reformation in the light of the teaching of the Catholic Church of today both in « its theoretical bases and its practical manifestations ». Dr. Skydsgaard, who is supervising the study, declared that the effort is necessary because both the Lutheran and the Catholic Churches have undergone changes since the sixteenth century division and that, accordingly, there should be « a fresh examination of what we have in common and what separates us ».

In fulfillment of his task, Dr. Skydsgaard is planning visits through southern France, Spain, and Italy; his tour will also include visits to Lourdes and other centers where the Virgin Mary is venerated. He will report on the results of his inquiry at a conference of Scandinavian theologians later this summer.

An article appearing under the auspices of the National Lutheran Council in the United States observes that although a study of this kind would have been « unthinkable a few decades ago », there is now « a new climate of mutual study and conversation between Roman Catholics and Protestants » which makes the undertaking possible.

In Paris, meanwhile, the periodical *Informations Catholiques*

Internationales commended the Lutheran initiative. The French Catholic fortnightly published a 3000 word interview with Professor Skydsgaard in which present-day Lutheran church life in Scandinavian countries was assessed and points of agreement and disagreement between Catholics and Lutherans were discussed.

* * *

Roman Catholic-Lutheran Dialogues Increase in West Germany

In the course of a recent series of lectures delivered at St. Paul's Lutheran Seminary in Minnesota, Professor Ernest Kindler, a prominent German Lutheran theologian declared that ecumenical dialogues between Catholic and Lutheran theologians are growing more common in West Germany. An indication of this, said Dr. Kindler, could be seen from the fact that more than half of all the doctoral dissertations submitted to Roman Catholic faculties there deal with Protestant theology.

The noted German Lutheran explained that theological encounters between theologians of the two faiths have kept increasing since the end of World War II, when Catholics and Protestants were brought closer together by their common resistance to Nazism. These encounters, he said, take their form in annual week-long meetings of Lutheran and Catholic professors, in local church discussions, and in books and articles. (*EPS*)

* * *

Rules for Catholic-Protestant Dialogue Presented by American Seminary Professor

An article of unusual ecumenical interest has appeared simultaneously in two religious publications of recent date — one Catholic and the other Protestant — in which a Protestant writer proposes a set of rules to govern conversation between Catholic and non-Catholic Christians. The article, entitled « Rules for the Dialogue » was written by the Rev. Dr. Robert McAfee Brown and appeared both in the *Christian Century,* a Protestant weekly, and in the *Commonweal,* a weekly review published by Catholic laymen. Dr. Brown is Auburn Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York. (A note in the *Commonweal* reveals that the article by Dr. Brown is part of a book that he is writing in conjunction with Fr. Gustave Weigel, S. J. and which will be published by Doubleday in September 1960).

The author of the article on dialogue presents his readers with the following six rules which he feels are to be observed if discussion is to prove worthwhile:

1) Each partner must believe that the other is speaking in good faith.

2) Each partner must have a clear understanding of his own faith.

3) Each partner must strive for a clear understanding of the faith of the other.

4) Each partner must accept responsibility in humility and penitence for what his group has done, and is doing, to foster and perpetuate division.

5) Each partner must forthrightly face the issues which cause separation as well as those which create unity.

6) Each partner must recognize that all that can be done with the dialogue is to offer it up to God.

Dr. Brown likewise underlines the importance of being willing « to interpret the faith of the other in its best light rather than its worst » and that one « must maintain a continual willingness to revise his understanding of the faith of the other ».

« Many Roman Catholics today », he writes, « are saying that the perpetuation of the divisions of Christendom is not simply due to Protestant wrongheadedness, but also due to a wrong kind of Catholic intransigence. Protestants should acknowledge that for centuries the Protestant tendency was to divide Christendom ever and ever more disastrously, and that if the ecumenical movement is reversing this trend it is still building on the wreckage of three centuries.

« Such admissions are not simply a matter of being polite. They are a matter of recognizing that we all contribute to the perpetuation of division in a Christendom which Christ clearly wills to be one. Each side, in other words, bears responsibility for the fact that Christendom is divided, and each side bears responsibility for the fact that Christendom remains divided. It is salutary that one of the prayers which Catholics and Protestants are permitted to pray together contains the phrase, ' Forgive us our trespasses ' ».

* * *

English Jesuit Discusses Dogmatic Basis for Union

Speaking to members of the St. John Chrysostom Society in London in connection with the Unity Octave observance in January, Fr. Thomas Corbishley, S. J. stated that in addition to prayer for union there was also need to strive for a dogmatic basis as well. Here, he said, it was important to discriminate between what is essential and what is accidental in the Church.

« Heaven knows », declared Fr. Corbishley, « the problem of reunion bristles with difficulties of every kind. But let us not introduce entirely gratuitous obstacles by suggesting that the following of Christ demands not only an acceptance of a core of doctrine and of a central sacramental system, but also implicit faith in, shall we say, a liking for typical repository art, complete approval of academic standards in Catholic educational institutions — in fact, an unquestioning acquiescence in the *status quo*.

« The parable of the wheat and the cockle », concluded Father Corbishley, « reminds us that Our Lord Himself admitted that there would be imperfections in His Church; let us not try to pretend that by some miracle the tares have been eliminated ». (*C. Herald*)

* * *

Australian Conference Warned about Christianity's Divisions

Speaking at the first National Conference of Australian Churches in Melbourne which drew some 430 delegates from 18 denominations, Bishop J. Lesslie Newbigin asserted that Christianity's divisions make a « mockery of our missions » and constitute « a public denial of the sufficiency of Calvary ».

« No task », he added, « is more urgent than the task of penitent and patient wrestling with these divisions, till Christ Himself restores to us the unity which is His Will ». Bishop Newbigin attended the Conference in his capacity as chairman of the International Missionary Council.

« The Life and Mission of the Church » he told the delegates, « are not two things but one. Its life is in its mission. The missionary work of the Church is not one of the strands of which world history is composed; it is the clue to world history, the Gospel is the announcement of the end of world history. It concerns the whole human race and there is an obligation in it to bring it to the whole human race without delay ».

It is particularly for this reason, Bishop Newbigin maintained, that it is essential for Christians to understand the signs of the times, « not as merely an intellectual affair, but involving us in committment as God's witnesses to the ends of the earth. That is why you cannot drop foreign missions out of Christianity without losing the core of the Gospel ». (*EPS*)

* * *

Closer Co-operation Planned between American Orthodox

At a recent meeting in New York City, leaders of nine Orthodox bodies voted to inquire into the possibilities of creating a Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops in America. The meeting was sponsored by Archbishop Iakovos of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and was attended by bishops from the following Orthodox groups: the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America, the Syrian Antiochian Church, the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese in the United States and Canada, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of America, the Romanian Canonical Missionary Church in the United States and Canada, the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church, the Albanian Orthodox Church of America, and the Bulgarian Diocese of North and South America and Australia.

One of the measures adopted at the meeting of the Orthodox prelates was the agreement to suspend all public statements referring to relations with non-Orthodox bodies until after the Pan-Orthodox meeting planned by Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople for this coming summer. It is thought that this latter conference will take place some time in July on the island of Rhodes and will concern itself with the idea of a Council of all Orthodox Churches.

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Catholic and Orthodox Coptic Patriarchs Meet in Egypt

The two Coptic Patriarchs of Alexandria — the leader of the Copts in union with the Holy See and the head of the separated Coptic Church met in January for a brief discussion.

The meeting between Catholic Patriarch Stephanos I Sidarouss and Patriarch Kyrillos VII of the separated Coptic churches was said to have been held in a very cordial atmosphere. It came only a month after the visit to Egypt of the spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox Church, Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople, who had earlier met with Orthodox and Catholic leaders in Jerusalem and had conferred with Latin and Eastern Catholics, Orthodox, and other separated Eastern Christians and Protestants during his visit in Egypt.

The Catholic Coptic Church, whose patriarchate was restored in 1895, has only about 80,000 members. The separated Copts total

about 1,500,000. Both Patriarchs claim succession to the first Bishop of Alexandria, St. Mark the Evangelist. There were two separate lines of patriarchs as early as the sixth century. (*NC*)

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Noted Benedictine Ecumenist Dies

Dom Lambert Beauduin, well known in both Catholic and non-Catholic ecumenical circles for his long association with the Benedictine priories of Amay and Chevetogne in Belgium and with the ecumenical quarterly *Irénikon*, died on January 11 at the age of eighty-six.

In answer to the appeal made by Pope Pius XI to the Primate of the Benedictine Order, Dom Beauduin founded a small monastery at Amay in 1925 dedicated particularly to Russian Byzantine studies and intended to serve as a foyer for matters dealing with reunion and with the Christian East. It was at this monastery the following year that Dom Beauduin and his confreres launched the periodical *Irénikon*. « This new review », he wrote at the time, « brings with it a message of peace. It wishes to be the organ of a great movement for the union of the Churches ».

The community of Amay was later to transfer its headquarters to Chevetogne and from there has continued its work for the cause of Christian unity. Today the priory is one of the leading Catholic centers in the ecumenical field and has been visited by many Orthodox, Anglicans, and Protestants over the years. This has been in accordance with Dom Beauduin's original intention, for he considered that true unitive activity consisted in establishing contacts between Catholics and their separated brethren by every means possible, particularly by a psychological *rapprochement*.

Perhaps the key to Dom Beauduin's ecumenical apostolate can be found in the following passage which he wrote some years ago: « ... to create, above all, an atmosphere favorable to mutual understanding and respect; to dedicate oneself to a work of adaptation in all the domains of religious thought and practice; to disengage the essentials of Christianity from the legitimate ethnical and historical forms with which it has been clothed over the course of the centuries in order to safeguard all its original expansion and to render it capable of assimilation by all cultures and all civilizations, for the Church of Christ is neither Latin, nor Greek, nor Slav, but is Catholic ...; in brief, to give oneself over in patience, in charity, and humility to a work on the psychological level, a work destined to dissipate prejudices and to open up for the East and West the bright vistas of confidence and of love ».

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New Lexicon on the Ecumenical Movement Published in Germany

A World Church Lexicon (*Weltkirchenlexikon*), a reference book on the ecumenical movement, has recently been published at Stuttgart under the auspices of the German Evangelical Kirchentag organization. A work of 1,750 pages, the book furnishes information on more than 1,200 different topics relating to the history, development, and programs of Christian denominations throughout the world and of the ecumenical movement. It likewise includes a long bibliography and an impressive number of photographs and illustrations.

The lexicon, which so far is available only in German, is made up of contributions from several hundred church leaders from many different countries. The work of compiling and editing the volume was entrusted to Dr. Franklin H. Littell, professor at Emory University, Georgia, and Dr. Hans Hermann Walz, general secretary of the Kirchentag organization. (*EPS*).

* * *

A recent Survey of Catholic Ecumenism

The theological students of the Seminaire des Carmes in Paris have recently issued a very interesting and informative brochure which sets forth in succinct form the various endeavors throughout the Catholic world in the interests of Christian unity.

Entitled *Que Fait l'Eglise Catholique pour l'Unité des Chrétiens*, the booklet presents first of all a concise listing of the main events in the ecumenical movement, among both Catholics and non-Catholics, in the 19th and 20th centuries.

There follow next three sections under the following headings:

I. L'Oecuménisme dans l'Eglise Catholique.

II. L'Oecuménisme dans les Pays Chrétiens.

III. L'Oecuménisme dans chaque Chrétien.

The brochure then concludes with a short bibliography of ecumenical works and periodicals written and sponsored by Catholics and non-Catholics in different countries, particularly on the European continent.

AROUND THE WORLD

ROME

Second Vatican Council
to Consider Internal Church Affairs Primarily

His Holiness Pope John XXIII has indicated that the coming Ecumenical Council must concern itself primarily with the Church's internal affairs before any thought can be given to Christian unity.

Speaking to a group of priests from Bologna led by His Eminence, Giacomo Cardinal Lercaro, their archbishop, the Pope spoke of the interested reaction which followed the announcement of the coming council, comparing it with Pope Leo XIII's invitation to Christian unity in 1897. He noted that Leo's letter at that time had been received with disdain, while « the most widespread hopes were expressed instead at the simple announcement of the forthcoming council ».

His Holiness went on to say that the fundamental function of a council is always the internal unity of the Church, and he added that « if we were first of all to listen to the rumours and proposals from outside and begin discussing them, others would cross our path and soon intricate obstacles would arise. The Church must, instead, think above all of its constant life and finality, responding with new vigor to the divine plan established by Our Lord. Once we have established, agreed upon, and set forth the best solutions, including the new demands of the times, we will be able to indicate to our separated brethren the sure road to that unity to which they also aspire ».

This was the second time within a week that the Pope had touched upon this subject. Earlier in an address to the Central Council of Catholic Action, he had said almost the same thing, except that his reference to non-Catholics was possibly more emphatic.

« If our separated brethren », he had remarked, « who have broken away and who are also divided among themselves wish to realize the common desire for unity, we can say to them with great

affection: this is your house; this is the house of all those who bear the sign of Christ. If, as some say, there is a desire instead to open discussions and debates, nothing would be accomplished ».

This remark of the Holy Father was interpreted in some sectors of the press as closing the door to any discussions with non-Catholics on Christian unity. Vatican authorities, however, have given the assurance that this was not his intention. What he was saying, they declared, was that the Church must attend to putting its own house in order before it can enter into discussions with others. This interpretation was in fact borne out by his later address to the clergy of Bologna.

On Candlemas Day — an occasion when the clerical and religious communities of men in Rome present the Pope with beautifully decorated candles in accordance with a long-standing custom — His Holiness linked the ceremony of presentation with the next council and declared that he would be sending the candles offered him to the more important Catholic shrines throughout the world to serve as a reminder to the faithful to pray for the success of the Ecumenical Council.

« This morning », said Pope John, « approaching the altar ... for morning Mass, We consecrated Our humble existence to the Ecumenical Council, and we decided that these candles, so impressive and so artfully made, should be sent to the most famous shrines of all nations, those erected by the piety of the people in honor of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the most distinguished holy apostles and confessors.

« We trust that in these shrines, these candles may become an invitation to all the faithful of every race and every language to unite with the Pope in prayer so that the preparation and development of the future council may become something like the passage of an angel of the Lord over all souls. May the preparations revitalize souls, give them a new impulse to charity, elevate the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, as Jesus wished it to be, and achieve the unity of flock and shepherd ». (*NC*)

Pope John Addresses Biblical Scholars

His Holiness Pope John XXIII in an address to biblical scholars affirmed that they must discover and make known to all the truths contained in the Scriptures. The Pope spoke at a ceremony commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome. The institute, which has graduated more than 1,200 professors of Sacred Scripture, is a leading Catholic center for biblical studies under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers.

Speaking to a meeting attended by twenty-one cardinals and hundreds of scholars and university professors in the Vatican's Hall of Benediction, the Pope stressed that biblical scholars must faithfully adhere to the Church's teaching authority. He praised the institute for an increase in its scientific publications and its constant growth in importance. His Holiness told the scholars that « dedication to science is your first and highest title of honor which has already won so much esteem for you with the passing of time ».

He said further that biblical scholarship « calls for great caution and temperance, so as not to present as definite what is only a probable and working hypothesis. Yet this does not prevent a clarification of questions which assail minds and create difficulties and dangers for the faith of so many Christians ... Under your patient scientific work, which uses the most modern means of positive discipline, there is, therefore, and there must be a pastoral goal, an effort to communicate to souls the discovered and possessed truth ».

Pope John warned, however, that « it would not be worthy of your undertaking to dedicate yourselves ... to problems, let Us say, of common interest, while neglecting a great part of that treasure which is the word of God and the centuries-old interpretive efforts of the holy Fathers and distinguished teachers of the Church ».

« To combine absolute dedication to science with complete submission to the sacred deposit of faith and to the Church's teaching authority », concluded the Pope, « requires in practice much acumen and caution. One, in fact, must establish clearly the real significance and degree of certainty of a scientific conclusion, and, on the other, the meaning and importance of a theological doctrine or of a decision of the Church's teaching authority.

« Only full dedication to knowledge and perfect docility to the ' mind of the Church ' can lead one to find the right anwer to the different problems and protect scholars against lamentable errors ».

Declaring that study alone is not enough to balance scholarship with adherence to the Church's teachings, the Pope said that « one must invoke the comforting light of the Holy Spirit » as well. (*Oss. Romano*)

Marian Academy Granted Papal Rank

The International Marian Academy has recently been raised to a pontifical status by His Holiness, Pope John XXIII. It now takes its place beside eight other learned societies of papal rank.

In conferring the new title on the Marian Academy, the Pope warned against excesses in devotion to Mary and in claims concerning her. At the same time he also admonished against underestimating her part in God's plan for man's redemption.

Recalling the admonition made by the late Pope Pius XII in 1954 on the occasion of the international Mariological Congress, His Holiness declared that « it is cautioned that Mariology, based ... on solid foundations, must not go beyond truth as a result of a false or immoderate boldness, nor must it be restricted within too narrow limits in considering that special dignity proper to the Mother of God and to the Alma Socia (dear partner) of Christ the Redeemer ».

The point raised by Pope John in this connection was also touched upon by the *Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican City daily, in a commentary on the promotion of the Marian Academy. The newspaper observed:

« It is not a rare case when theologians who, living among Protestants, would seem rather inclined to a certain ' minimization ', while others, born and educated in countries with eminently Marian traditions, incline rather toward exaggeration. It is clear that through calm discussion of the problems, even difficult ones, the truth is easily arrived at.

« Thus, the international Marian-Mariological congresses are the best means of debating the problems and reaching solutions.

« This unity among Catholics, the elimination of exaggerations and the objective search for truth, will doubtless have no indifferent influence on our separated brethren. In such a way, the modern development of Mariology and of Marian piety in the Church ... not only will not constitute an obstacle to the desired unity of Christians — as Protestants and some Catholic circles would wish to affirm — but it will constitute the surest sign and the happiest forecast that Mary is ' the greatest help offered to us by God for the attainment of unity ' ». (*NC*)

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Pope Is Thanked for His Efforts to Help Jews

B'nai B'rith, an international Jewish service organization, has thanked His Holiness Pope John XXIII for his endeavors to help Jews.

A delegation of B'nai B'rith members, together with their president, Label A. Katz of New Orleans, was recently received in

audience at the Vatican. The group was on its way to Israel to meet with Premier David Ben-Gurion.

In a statement which he read to the Pope, Mr. Katz said in part: « I am pleased to inform Your Holiness that for many years there have been excellent relations and constructive co-operation between B'nai B'rith and numerous Catholic organizations and institutions, and warm friendships with clergy and scholars of the Church. We have many times joined forces with our Catholic friends in areas of common concern for the sake of the common good. We particularly welcome this opportunity to extend personally to Your Holiness the firm gratitude of B'nai B'rith for your dedicated efforts to promote world peace and advance the well-being of men ».

After the audience, Mr. Katz revealed that he had presented the respectful greetings of his organization to the Pope and thanked him for his activities on behalf of persecuted Jews when he was Apostolic Delegate to Turkey from 1935 to 1944. From Turkey, a center of wartime diplomacy, the Pope was able to save many Jews persecuted by Slovak, Bulgarian and Hungarian Nazis, Mr. Katz noted. He said further that in his capacity as Vatican diplomat Pope John had helped prevent the mass deportation of Jews to Nazi concentration camps. (*The Tablet*)

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ENGLAND

Late Catholic Statistics

The Catholic population of England and Wales has risen above 3,500,000, according to the 1960 British Catholic Directory. Basing its figures on returns for the year 1958, the publication puts the new total of English and Welsh Catholics at 3,553,500.

The Directory puts the Catholic population of Scotland at 780,050 and that of Northern Ireland at 484,151. This makes an over-all total of 4,817,701 Catholics for the United Kingdom, an increase of 146,521 over the previous year.

The Liverpool archdiocese has the largest Catholic population of any see in Britain — 497,000. Next in order are the two London sees, the archdiocese of Westminster with 470,000 Catholics and the diocese of Southwark with some 400,000. (*Universe*)

Monastic Ruins to be Preserved

The most extensive medieval monastic ruins in Great Britain have recently become the property of the state.

The British Government has bought from private owners the remaining area of a large pre-Reformation Dominican friary at Gloucester, west England. Plans are now underway to repair the historic building, known as « Blackfriars », and to preserve it for the nation as an ancient monument.

The portion acquired lately incorporates most of the original choir and transepts of the Dominican church and part of the old cloister. It likewise includes the only building in England known to illustrate the Dominicans' methods in the 13th century of turning their houses into centers of study. (*NC*)

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MALTA

Arrival of St. Paul Commemorated in Festive Ceremonies

Many thousands of people took part recently in a procession that opened year-long celebrations to mark the 1,900th anniversary of St. Paul's shipwreck on the island of Valletta in Malta. The celebrations received a blessing from His Holiness Pope John, who expressed the hope that they would renew Malta's spiritual life.

The opening procession began at St. Paul's Cathedral after the celebration of Mass by Archbishop Michael Gonzi of Malta. The cathedral is built on the site of the residence of St. Publius, governor of Malta at the time of St. Paul's shipwreck and later the island's first bishop.

The climax of the celebrations will come during July when His Eminence, Aloysius Cardinal Muench, former Nuncio to Germany, will be present as Papal Legate together with fifty other bishops from various countries. Centenary observances will include pilgrimages to a relic of St. Paul, special art exhibitions, and a water festival.

According to tradition, St. Paul was shipwrecked on the island in 60 A. D. while being taken to Rome as prisoner. Because of his sojourn of three months there, the island was converted to Christianity. Today 311,000 of its 321,000 people belong to the Catholic faith. (*Oss. Romano*)

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DENMARK

Growing Interest in Catholic Church Seen

Speaking in New York early in February, Bishop Theodore Suhr of Copenhagen declared that interest in the Catholic Church has been growing rapidly among non-Catholic residents of Denmark

In an address to members of St. Ansgar's Catholic League, Bishop Suhr said, for example, that during the Octave of Prayer in January so many non-Catholics came to visit the Catholic cathedral in Copenhagen that at times people outside the church had to await their turn to enter. He said, further, that Danish newspapers are full of discussions of the Church written by non-Catholics, and that conversations on theological points are being conducted by Catholic and non-Catholic theologians.

Part of the interest in Catholic thought, declared the bishop, stems from the new « high church » movement among Danish Lutherans. This movement has already resulted in the restoration of the *Kyrie Eleison* and the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* to the liturgy of the communion service in Copenhagen's Lutheran cathedral. (*B. Pilot*)

* * *

SWEDEN

Sweden To Have First Carmelite Convent in over Three Centuries

The Swedish Government has approved a petition submitted by Carmelite nuns in Glumslov, Sweden, for the establishment of a contemplative convent. The nuns will now set up their first cloistered convent in the country in 365 years. The government's decision was made at this time because several Swedish young women wish to live a full contemplative life in the Carmelite Order.

Six Carmelite nuns came to Glumslov from Ghent, Belgium, in June 1956 to begin the first foundation of their community in Sweden since the Reformation. During the Middle Ages a large Carmelite monastery was situated at nearby Landskrona.

Sweden's last monastery at Vadstena, belonging to the congregation founded by St. Bridget of Sweden in 1344, was closed in 1595. An extensive restoration of the ruins of this foundation is now being carried out by the Swedish Government.

Before 1595 cloisters had existed in the country for over 450 years. Sweden's first monastery was founded early in the twelfth century.

Sisters of the revised branch of the Brigittine Order of the Most Holy Saviour — begun in 1911 by a Swedish — born convert to the Catholic faith, Mother Elizabeth Hesselblad — returned to Djursholm, near Stockholm, in 1923 and to Vadstena in 1935. This Brigittine congregation is also contemplative, but the Sisters do social work as well. (*NC*).

* * *

RUSSIA

Programs of Study Modified in Religious Institutes

A recent issue of *Documentation Française* carries an interesting and reliably documented article which reflects the present situation of theological schools in the Soviet Union. The article reports that all such schools (seminaries and academies) were closed in 1918 and remained so as the antireligious policy continued until the end of the second World War. This era of persecution succeeded in impoverishing the Russian clergy in an extraordinary manner: in 1914, for example, there were 163 Orthodox bishops and 66,140 priests; while in 1941 the bishops numbered only 4 and the priests 5665.

Between 1944 and 1948 two theological academies and eight seminaries were permitted to be reopened. If one takes into account the religious needs of a country the size of Russia, this small number seems insignificant, especially since up to the present the number has remained the same. Before the revolution there were in fact 57 seminaries, 185 theological institutes, and 4 academies of higher studies.

It is interesting to note the formative content of the curriculum prescribed for these new religious institutes. Those who were charged with their organization had to reconcile in some way the exigencies of the Church with those made by the Party — and with insistence. Nevertheless, it happened that some of the subjects which had been imposed by the Party turned out to be of genuine value in the formation of pastors of souls who were rendered more conscious of the concrete reality they would later have to face. In any case, the government did not interfere at close range in the carrying out of the curriculum with the result that the directors of the schools were able to include other studies more in conformity with pastoral work.

Among the subjects taught in these ecclesiastical schools, besides the usual matter to be found in Catholic seminaries, were: the history of Russian thought, the history of the Russian Church, the questions of religious division and sectarianism, the structure of the Soviet State, the Soviet Constitution, the Russian, Greek, and Slavic languages, one modern language, and basic psychology.

It is quite probable that the curriculum in question produced excellent results on the pastoral level, and perhaps because of this the course of studies underwent a change in 1958. The modifications

can be deduced from the 1958 edition of *The Russian Orthodox Church* and seem particularly significant. Gone from the seminaries are basic psychology, the history of the Church and of Russian religious thought, readings in church Slavonic, and the study of the structure of the Soviet State. Besides, the choice of a modern language is limited to English, French, and German.

The puzzling thing about these changes is that they were neither announced nor justified. They have simply come about as a matter of fact, and the Russian Church will probably have to tolerate them in silence.

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THE UNITED STATES

First International Philosophical Review To Appear in English

The first issue of the new *International Philosophy Quarterly* will be published in September after two years of preparation, according to a recent announcement made at Fordham University in New York.

Father James M. Somerville, S. J., chairman of the graduate department of philosophy at the University, said that the publication « will mark the appearance of the first and only fullscale international review of philosophy in the English language ». He declared further that the review will be edited in the United States by the Fordham graduate philosophy department and co-edited in Europe by the Jesuit faculty of philosophy at the University of Louvain in Belgium. (*NC*).

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GREECE

Ancient Theological Lexicon Discovered

What is considered as a very valuable discovery in theological literature has recently come to light in Greece. It is the famous Lexicon of Photius, the Greek Orthodox scholar and theologian, who was Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople during the ninth century at the time of a major schism between the Latin and Eastern Churches.

The discovery of the ancient document was made in a Greek Orthodox monastery in Macedonia by Bishop Philipos of Grevena, and plans to publish the original text have already been made by the Theological Faculty of the University of Thessalonika.

The finding of the Lexicon is of great interest to theologians since up to now only certain sections of it had been known to scholars. (*EPS*)

Revised New Testament in Greek in Preparation

It has been announced at Athens that a committee of scriptural scholars and theologians have begun work on a revised critical text of the New Testament in the original Greek. The task has been entrusted to the Theological Faculty of the University of Athens which will make use of several documents and manuscripts not previously available in such an undertaking. In consequence, it is believed that the completed text will prove to be the most accurate ever published. Publication of the revised text is expected before the end of this year.

According to the Ecumenical Press Service, the new text will be the first ever prepared by Greek Orthodox scholars. Over the past years the New Testament version in use in the Greek Orthodox Church has been that prepared in 1898 by Dr. Eberard Nestle, D. D. for the Bible Society of Württemburg, Germany. This edition has undergone several revisions since that time, the last as recently as 1958. Dr. Nestle's text, with alternative readings, has been used extensively by Roman Catholic scholars as well.

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THE PHILIPPINES

Pax Romana Meeting Considers Impact of World's Great Religions

A conference on the impact of the great religions of the world came to a conclusion in Manila in the later part of January with an appeal for more such meetings to pave the way toward world understanding and peace. The meeting was sponsored by Pax Romana, an international movement of Catholic students and intellectuals and by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

Thom Kerstiens, general secretary of Pax Romana, declared in reference to the congress: « We should meet together and more often. Here we have learned tolerance and comprehension of the problems of those who have diverse religious beliefs ».

At the conclusion of the conference, the delegates were in general agreement that:

1. Succeeding conferences should discuss specific subjects, such as birth control, over-population, and education.

2. Subjects should be discussed at the practical level.

3. Tolerance should be maintained in succeeding similar gatherings.

Among the speakers who gave expression to the Catholic viewpoint on the themes discussed were Fr. Horacio De la Costa, S. J. and Mr. Masao Matsumoto of Japan. In the course of his address, Father De la Costa affirmed that « Catholicism stresses the sacredness of the human person and his basic rights ... Upon these immovable piers it seeks to establish institutions — family, economic, international — of sufficient flexibility to meet ever-changing needs of the human situation ».

In his turn, Mr. Matsumoto predicted that Catholics in his country will begin to be felt as a strong group of people who will eventually have great influence on the development of Japan. His address reflected the conviction of many of the Pax Romana delegates, namely, that one of the principal tasks of the Catholic « intellectual » is to be a bridge between the national culture and the life of the Church.

Other speakers at the Manila conference discussed Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Orthodox Christianity, Judaism, Shinto, and Protestantism. (*NC*).

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TANGANYIKA

Recent Religious Statistics

The creation of Mgr. Laurian Rugambwa, the Bishop of Rutabo, as the first African cardinal has served to call attention to the religious situation in his native Tanganyika.

Tanganyika at present is a United Nations' trust territory on Africa's eastern shore. Currently under British administration, it is to become self- governing this year and will eventually enjoy full independence.

According to the latest available figures, the total population of the country is 9,298,043. Of this number, 2,009,398 are listed as being Moslems, 1,515,043 are Catholics, 514.777 are Protestants, and 8,323 belong to various Christian sects. (*NC*).

BOOK REVIEWS

EDWARD CHARLES RICH, *Seeking the City*. A spiritual autobiography, London: Burns and Oates, 1959, pp. vii - 134.

As the readers of *Unitas* already know, Edward Charles Rich was at one time an Anglican minister who in 1956 asked to be received into the Catholic Church (Cf. *Unitas*, vol. viii, pp. 135-137). Mr Rich died last year, leaving an autobiography which he wrote to explain to his former colleagues in the Anglican Church the reasons for his conversion. As its title indicates, the book tells of his spiritual pilgrimage towards the City (of God).

There are different legitimate ways of speaking of a conversion. In a Catholic ecumenical review it would be out of place to use it as an occasion for polemics; but it is possible, I believe, to study its manner of procedure —not indeed in order to triumph over a supposed adversary but to profit by the light that the experiences of a person of good will cannot fail to provide in a circumstance of such importance. Let us, therefore, with all ecumenical tranquillity follow the itinerary of Mr. Rich, such as he himself has traced it out for the benefit of his friends.

Born into a religious family, but embarked upon a way of life quite removed from Catholicism — that of the Quakers — without sacraments and almost without dogmatic principles, Edward Rich was won over to Anglicanism while still an adolescent by reason of his enthusiasm for the men of the Oxford Movement, and above all for Newman. In this new milieu he chose to adhere to the Catholic interpretation of Anglican doctrine and showed himself keenly interested in supernatural truth. After the completion of his studies at Oxford, he held different positions in the ministry of his Church, those of vicar, canon, and school inspector. Expending himself with ardor for the good of the Church of England, he sought above all to give it the unity and authority which he saw was lacking. After many long years of experience and of research, he came to reflect more deeply on the problem of authority in his Church. His intention was to strengthen his own profession of faith.

Canon Rich, accordingly, began work on a book which eventually was to come out under the title *Spiritual Authority in the Church of England*. To his mind, Anglicanism was founded upon the Bible and on the tradition of the first centuries; but he did not

admit the infallibility of the Bible and of the Church. Where, then, was a basis of security to be found? Work on the manuscript advanced without a satisfying solution to the problem. At this time a friend suggested to him to study Newman's *Essay on Development* and the criticism which Mozley had directed against it. It was then that he understood that a revelation necessarily involves development. It is not therefore enough that revelation in its explicit form be guaranteed as true; it is also necessary that its development be equally ensured. Otherwise the promise of Christ to assist His Church would not be maintained. It thus becomes necessary for the Church to be infallible to guarantee the truth of such development in the measure that it comes about.

Mr. Rich had crossed the Rubicon. Yet he had need of further assistance, for the announcement of a proximate definition of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary troubled him and served as a setback. Nevertheless, he prayed to Mary, and quite unexpectedly one day at the moment of communion he saw in a flash that the Assumption is actually an effect of the Incarnation: the body of the Virgin, which had formed the body of Christ from its own substance, had to be clothed with that glory of a risen body. « So overwhelming was the experience that I had to put out my hand to prevent myself from falling. I was trembling from head to foot. I have never since doubted that I had been granted the reality of a wonderful supernatural experience which brought utter conviction to my mind ». (p. 105).

Canon Rich then went on to complete his book which came to the conclusion that the Church is infallible. A rather lengthy period was to follow during which he perceived little by little the impossibility of his remaining in the Church of England; and the day came when he understood that henceforth it was a question of the salvation of his soul. Thus, on 19 May, 1956, he was received into the Catholic Church at Farm Street in London.

There are few books which can convey as well as this autobiography a knowledge of the conditions of the Anglican world.

CHARLES BOYER, S. J.

ITALO VOLPI, *Il dramma dei fratelli separati dinanzi al Concilio Vaticano II*: Assisi, 1960, pp. 464. (*)

Under this provocative title, the Reverend Italo Volpi, professor of theology at the Regional Seminary of Assisi, has written a

(*) The present review is an abridgement of the original in the French edition of Unitas for February-March, 1960.

voluminous work which deserves to be known if only to serve as evidence that Italy — unjustly considered as being insensible to the ecumenical problem — is definitely interested in the drama of a divided Christendom.

Don Volpis's study consists of four general divisions: the eve of the Council (pp. 5-49), an historical synthesis of the divisions among Christians (pp. 50-164), a comparative doctrinal synthesis (pp. 165-299), and *Ut omnes unum sint — that they all may be one* — (pp. 301-451).

In the first chapter of his book, the author recalls the mistaken interpretations which the first announcement of the coming council in January 1959 called forth in the press, and then indicates the veritable unitive orientation which the second Vatican Council will assume. His comments in this respect are particularly interesting:

« Have we reason », he writes, « to feel disillusioned because the Council will not be the assembly of all those Churches which call themselves Christian? But how could an invitation addressed to bishops of the Orthodox or Anglican Churches and to ministers of Protestant Churches to take part in a Council of the Catholic Church be possible? What end would it serve? Let us face the reality of this fact.

« Indeed, the Eastern Orthodox, Anglicans, and Protestants could be invited to a conference with the Catholic Church as a preliminary phase in the course of preparatory work prior to the Council, with due account taken especially of the fact that the ecumenical theme will undoubtedly occupy an important place on the program of the Council which will have to consider certain doctrinal points (the concept of the Church, the primacy of the Pope, the divine value of tradition) in which the breach has been more serious and where effective conciliation seems more difficult. Carried on in an atmosphere of confidence and of mutual respect and with sincere sentiments of humility, of charity, and of fidelity to truth, as well as with a conscience awakened to the responsibility that each has before God, such an ecumenical discussion could bring about good results. In any case, for several years now meetings of this kind have already been organized between Catholic and Protestant theologians with full consent from Rome, and as the time of the Council approaches it would be useful to intensify them. But it is evident that we must not expect magical results from such preconciliar conferences.

« This is not meant to disillusion, but to urge us to take a clear view of history! The ecumenicity (or universality) of the Council is not lessened by the fact that it is understood in the

precise sense intended by the Catholic Church and not in the sense given to the term when speaking of the World (oecuménique) Council of Churches (1). Nor should this lesson the attention which we should give to all that Christian humanity separated from Rome. The unity of all Christians remains as the goal and the ideal of the coming Ecumenical Council. The latter has been conceived by the Pope and will be actualized as a means of witnessing in favor of unity — as an Epiphany of unity. And unity is more than union. The Council will not be the instrument of union; rather it must be the herald of unity ...

« If those who have eyes to see and really do see, with the aid of God's grace, the Pope hopes that the Ecumenical Council, which will bring together the bishops of the Catholic world and imbue Catholicity with new fervor, will in itself constitute such a grand manifestation of unity that those Christians separated from the See of Rome cannot help but be struck by it and take resolute steps on the way of *rapprochement* and conciliation. Then will they exclaim: ' Precisely there is the unity willed by Jesus in His prayer ' that they all may be one '; there is the unity which that divine prayer has sustained all through the centuries! »

« The pages which follow will cause Catholics to reflect. They will be disconcerted above all by the fact ... that the initial breaches have gradually widened and that today, after so many centuries, they appear as deep chasms. In reality, we have had our share of culpability in this; and the fault lies not only with the Catholics of the past but also of the present day, for neither individually nor collectively have we caused to shine forth in the bright light of evidence the unity of the family in which Jesus has brought us together.

« The Holy Father, with an infinite delicateness of expression, but with a serious view of the problem at its deepest level, places upon the shoulders of every Catholic the charge which comes to him for the past, the present, and the future. The Ecumenical Council is truly mobilizing everyone in the service of charity to be rendered towards our separated brethren ». (pp. 11-14)

These inspiring pages, in fact, do cause the reader to reflect. The author then presents him with a rapid synthesis of the twenty ecumenical councils, the concept of the Church of Christ, and a picture of Christendom today.

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(1) With respect to the different senses given to the word ' ecumenical ', cf. the article by Fr. Charles Boyer, S. I. *Unitas,* vol. XI (1959), pp. 6-9, and the work by Professor L. Zander (Orthodox), *Vision and Action,* London 1952, pp. 30 ff. where it is justly noted: « The word ' ecumenical ' has now become a slogan, and it is often employed to designate a mere inter-church courtesy ».

The second part of the Father Volpi's book retraces the history of the divisions which afflicted the Christian community through the centuries: the Nestorian and Monophysite schisms, the great schism of the East (and here the author gives an excellent resumé of *Le Schisme byzantin* by Fr. Martin Jugie), Protestantism and its eruption into multiple bodies, to say nothing of the disquieting array of contemporaneous sects. The concluding chapter in this section delineates with clarity and without a deliquescent irenicism the conspectus of doctrinal differences according to the classical order of our theological manuals.

The last part of Professor Volpi's book, in which he treats of the problem of unity in all its amplitude, is especially worthy of note. Here the author sums up, first of all, the activity of the Popes (endeavors towards union, the encyclical letters of Leo XIII and his successors, etc.). He likewise gives an account of Catholic efforts towards the return of Protestants to communion with Rome, the Malines Conversations (pp. 342-353), and the Ecumenical Movement (354-378).

Passing in review the difficulties to be found on the road to reunion, Father Volpi makes this apt observation with regard to the separated East, whose reconciliation is as difficult as the separation has been long: « In order to surmount all these personal obstacles (above all, the duty to recognize that one does not possess all the truth while there are others who possess it as well), a great gesture of generosity would be necessary; and this can only come about by an ardent love for unity ».

Finally the author does not hesitate to insist upon the enrichment which would accrue to the Catholic Church herself should union with separated Christians be effected. In this connection he writes: « Catholicism itself would derive great profit from union, for separations have rendered her poorer exteriorly or in extension and have limited or blocked her interior growth. In effect, in consequence of the secession of ' large sections ', the Church has lost valuable constructive forces, and this has tarnished the splendor of her most brilliant jewel: her universality, or catholicity ».

A « dawn of better times » has arisen, as we can see — especially since the announcement of the Ecumenical Council (pp. 398-429). Thus it is that we must all become apostles of unity. And by what means? Father Volpi reduces them to five terms: *pregare* to be known), *procedere* (to go ahead) (pp. 430 ff.).

« In order concludes the author, that division may not become for each of us a personal fault, we have an obligation incumbent upon us: to make of unity a problem of conscience and to work indefatigably for its solution » (p. 451).

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